

The Academy

A Weekly Review of Literature and Life.

No. 1390. Established 1869.

24 December, 1898.

Price Threepence.

[Registered as a Newspaper.]

The Literary Week.

THERE seems to be no doubt that there is a great decline in the popularity of Christmas numbers of periodicals this season. This will surprise no one who has of late years tried to avert weary eyes from the multitude of multi-coloured supplements—reclining damsels, Santa Claus, patient dogs, strutting soldiers, and what not—projected on his vision in every street, in every railway station. The news-vendors are puzzled, however, by the suddenness of the “slump.” One Christmas number has, however, been sold out at headquarters, and is not easily obtainable elsewhere; and a certain news-agent sold his entire stock of this publication, on the day he received it, to a customer who wished to send the copies to his colonial customers as a Christmas salutation.

IT has, we are sorry to say, been found necessary to inaugurate a fund to provide for the widow and children of the late Harold Frederic. There are two boys, aged ten and twelve, and two daughters, both some years older, and the need of the family, we are informed, is urgent. “By the terms of Mr. Frederic’s will the English royalties and copyrights of his works are left to his widow, but this possible source of revenue is so heavily mortgaged, that it must be some considerable time before any income, however small, can be looked for from this direction.” Several of Mr. Frederic’s friends have therefore come forward. A committee has been formed, including a number of men well known in literature and public life, and Mr. W. J. Fisher, 88, St. George’s-square, S.W., is honorary secretary. All donations should be sent to Mr. Fisher at the address given.

THE first part of Sir George Otto Trevelyan’s work on *The American Revolution* will be issued early in January. The period covered is 1766-1776. The book will amount substantially to a continuation of the same author’s *Early History of Charles James Fox*.

SIR GEORGE ROBERTSON, the author of the history of the siege of Chitral, left London with Lord Curzon last week to join the *Arabia* at Marseilles. A second edition of his book is in preparation.

THE translator of the story by “Art. Roë,” which we print elsewhere in this number, asks us to state that it has been translated by permission from the original in the *Revue des Deux Mondes*.

A REVIEWER in our columns last week referred to the “brave, unhappy Picquart.” A Paris correspondent

writes: “By the way, Picquart is not unhappy. He has achieved his work. He receives dozens of declarations of love daily, more cigars than he can ever smoke, and stacks on stacks of flowers.” We still call him unhappy.

MR. ALLAN MONKHOUSE points out a mis-statement which was made last week in our appreciation of his work. “It is a matter of little consequence,” he writes, “and a public correction is quite unnecessary, but I think I should say that you are mistaken in supposing me to be a solicitor. I am, in fact, engaged in a branch of the Manchester trade.” Mr. Monkhouse continues: “Your remarks about the influence of Turgenev are particularly interesting to me. It is curious that *On the Eve* is the one of his important books that I have not read, but this detracts little if at all from the appositeness of what you say. I had read his books with great admiration, but had hardly, hitherto, thought of him as a direct influence.”

APROPOS the remark that Mr. Hall Caine has been stating in America that the upper part of his face is like Shakespeare’s and the lower like Christ’s, Mr. Bernard Pike has written to the *Pall Mall Gazette* to suggest that all future editors of Shelley should adopt this statement as an explanatory footnote below the lines in “Adonais”:

Sad Urania scanned

The stranger’s mien, and murmured, “Who art thou?”

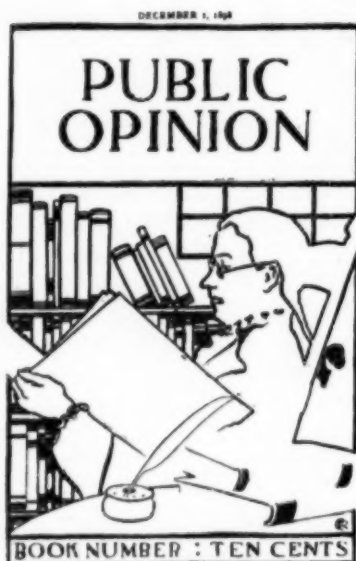
He answered not, but with a sudden hand

Made bare his branded and ensanguined brow,

Which was like Cain(—) or Christ’s—Oh! that it should be so!

THE meeting of the Harmsworth shareholders last Friday was a full-blown rose in the way of Company meetings. The young lion of Tudor-street was in the chair, and he said: “Ladies and Gentlemen,—The net results of our year’s trading are that we have sold no fewer than two hundred and twelve millions of copies of our periodicals, and that our net profits were £177,643 9s. 11d.” The thrill must have extended even to the elevenpence. Mr. Harmsworth then begged the consent of the shareholders to declare a dividend at the rate of 25 per cent. for the last half-year, making 22½ per cent. for the year. Public curiosity in the meeting naturally centred in any statement which Mr. Harmsworth might make respecting the foundation of the *Harmsworth Magazine*. The cost of establishing the magazine has been—on the first four numbers—£20,000.

IN reply to a request for his photograph for reproduction, a well-known man of letters writes to us: “The fact is, I am a firm believer in the mediæval (so-called) superstition that people can take your ‘reproduction’ and stick pins and things into it, and make you waste away.”



IMITATION is the sincerest form of flattery, and we must therefore feel pleased with the cover which has been designed for *Public Opinion*, a New York periodical. But the imitation might be better. There is no particular reason why the young man's wig should fuse with the furniture in the way it has done, nor why the sail of our ship should be placed in *Public Opinion's* ink-pot. We reproduce this derivative effort

so that our readers may compare original and copy.

APROPPOS of "C. E. Raimond's" protest in the *Daily Chronicle* as to the revelation of her identity, it may be interesting to refer to the efforts made to maintain the secret of the personality of Miss Fiona Macleod. We are told that Miss Macleod's letters have to be re-addressed three or four times before they come into her hands. She is known to a small circle who keep the secret well; her forcible handwriting is known to many. No editor has managed to get her photograph, though one had it in his hands. We doubt if Miss Macleod's publishers have met her. At first Mr. William Sharp did a good deal of her business work, but she superintends it herself now. The mystery as to her identity is not one that will arouse the suspicion of the literary, but certain Gaels, whose dislike for Miss Macleod's work amounts to a passion, have sought assiduously to force her to reveal her personality. Every sort of criticism except that which is literary has been applied to her work. One ardent Gael turned up the files of a Glasgow paper to see if any of the tragedies Miss Macleod depicts actually occurred, another took a census of Iona—no difficult task—to discover the originals of her characters. It is startling to learn that their researches were unavailing. Still another Gael is said to have done detective duty opposite a house in Edinburgh where Miss Macleod sometimes stays, and Miss Macleod is as unknown as ever.

So universal, writes a correspondent, has been the regret occasioned by the death of William Black that anything fresh concerning the novelist or his work may not yet be regarded as untimely. An early friend and contemporary in years of William Black in his Glasgow days relates that the novelist's first work, *James Merle: An Autobiography*, was issued while Black was engaged as a clerk in a book-binding firm in Ann-street, Glasgow. It was Charles Gibbon, he further states, who was the first to aid Black when he came to London. In a serial which Black contributed to the *Illustrated Monthly*, edited by Gibbon, the originals of two of the characters were the late Dr. James

Hedderwick and a leading member of the present staff of the *Glasgow Herald*. This old-time friend of the deceased novelist avers that Black, "some time before he went to London, fell over head and ears in love with the leading burlesque lady of the stock company of the old Theatre Royal in Dunlop-street," and that readers of *Shandon Bella* will get a glimpse there of his love-story.

CONCERNING William Black's fondness for tragic endings Mr. Marston, his publisher, has sent to the *Daily News* an interesting communication. He says that after reading *Wild Eelin* in proof, he wrote to Mr. Black asking that the end might be altered in the interests of the readers' happiness. The novelist replied: "As regards the 'tragic ending,' that seemed to me, from all points of view, inevitable. If I had forced the usual conventional happy climax, then perhaps for twenty-four hours you might have remembered something about the young lass that was living at Glengarva House; whereas, with the window-blinds down, you may from time to time have a backward thought towards *Eelin* of the eyes like the sea wave."

HUMOUR is an element which can find its way anywhere, even into memoirs of close friends. We have read with great interest Sir Wemyss Reid's tribute in the *Speaker* to the character and great gifts of the late William Black; but there is one passage at which it is impossible not to smile. "I am sure," writes Sir Wemyss, "that the characters of his stories were more real to him than most of the men and women whom he encountered in everyday life. They were so real that their fate affected him as if it had been the fate of his dearest friends. Four months after he finished *Macleod of Dare*, with its great tragedy of baffled love, he was so shaken in nerve that he did not dare to ride in a hansom cab." It is, perhaps, well for cab drivers that all Mr. Black's readers are not affected in the same way.

MISS JEANNETTE L. GILDER, the editor of the New York *Critic*, some years ago collected from the principal living poets a number of their preferences in their own poetry. Her aim was to make a selection of modern poetry in which the work was done by the poets themselves. The book appeared, and now, long after, the editor prints some of the poets' replies to her. Browning wrote thus: "Let me say—at a venture—lyrical, 'Saul' and 'Abt Vogler'; narrative, 'A Forgiveness'; dramatic, 'Caliban upon Setebos'; idyllic (in the Greek sense), 'Clive.' Which means that, being restricted to four dips in the lucky-bag, I should not object to be judged by these samples—so far as they go, for there is somewhat behind still!"

MATTHEW ARNOLD replied: "I cannot undertake to select the three or four poems of mine most likely to suit the general public in America. All that I can say is that the poem most liked by the public over here is, I think, 'The Forsaken Merman.'" And Mr. Swinburne chose "Hymn of Nian," "Hertha," in *Songs before Sunrise*, "Off Shore," and "By the North Sea."

WE are permitted by Mr. Grant Richards to make public an amusing document. Some while ago, in presenting Mr. Bernard Shaw with the statement of affairs respecting his *Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant*, Mr. Richards, as publishers so often have to do, included an item of £10 6s. for "author's alterations and extra proofs." Mr. Shaw's reply was characteristic. The larger portion of the account, he said, was not conspicuously nefarious (for a publisher) but one item could not be allowed to pass without comment. That was the £10 6s. for "author's alterations." Far from that charge being a just one, the publisher really owed the author a sum many times larger, and to explain the point Mr. Shaw drew up the following bill:

30th September, 1898.

G. Bernard Shaw,
Pitfold, Haslemere,
Surrey.

In account with Grant Richards.

Minimum customary allowance to author
for proof correction:

Pleasant Plays...	£10 0 0
Unpleasant Plays	10 0 0

Services rendered as typographical expert by
author to publisher:

Choice of type	£5 5 0
Design of page, margins, &c.	2 2 0
Choice of paper	2 2 0
Design of title-page	10 10 0
Inspection of proofs	52 10 0
Choice of binding	2 2 0
Consultations with publisher	105 0 0
Letters of instruction	63 0 0
Personal instruction (no charge)	0 0 0
	242 11 0

Extra proof corrections in style of
type-setting in the interest of
the publisher's reputation

£283 11 0

Less amount charged in publisher's
account for "author's alterations
and extra proofs"

10 6 0

£273 5 0

Interest at 6% for six months

8 3 9

£281 8 9

How the case now stands we do not know; but it is reassuring (although possibly disenchanting to the Authors' Society) to note that Mr. Richards remains Mr. Shaw's publisher, as *The Perfect Wagnerite* attests.

Two new volumes of Victor Hugo's posthumous works are about to be published under the editorship of his literary executor. One will consist of poetry; one of "Choses Vues." A number of new letters are also promised.

THIS year's winter-number of the *Studio* is devoted to book-plates. Not the severe book-plates of our ancestors and old-fashioned folk, but the pretty and fantastic trifles designed in the mode of the moment by clever black-and-white artists. Here may be seen specimens of English, American, French, German, Belgian, and Austrian book-plates. For dignity and strength the German and Austrian

examples are far ahead of our own. The English work is, as a rule, pretty before everything, and we can imagine some of the owners of these plates growing very tired of seeing them. It is the duty of a good book-plate not to weary its owner.

To our request for the names of the two books which during 1898 most pleased and interested her, Mme. de Navarro (Miss Mary Anderson) writes: Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac* and Pierre Loti's *Ramuntcho*. Mr. A. B. Walkley names Anatole France's *Le Mannequin d'Osier* and Mr. Moore's *Evelyn Innes*.

By the way, Mr. Walkley, who has lately added to his work as an impressionistic commentator upon new plays a series of personal essays in the *Saturday Daily Chronicle*, is one of Mr. Max Beerbohm's victims. This is the caricature:



MR. A. B. WALKLEY AS SEEN BY MR. MAX BEERBOHM.

THACKERAY's *Christmas Books*, just issued in the new Biographical Edition, comes with timeliness. Mrs. Ritchie's introduction, one of the most interesting of the series, is much occupied with Edward FitzGerald, whose

Thackeray scrap-book, full of drawings and letters by both W. M. T. and E. F'G., was sent to her soon after Thackeray's death, and from which quotations are now made. In 1831 FitzGerald rhymed genially to his friend. We cite a few lines:

I cared not for life, for true friend I had none—
I had heard 'twas a blessing not under the sun;
Some figures called friends, hollow, proud, or cold-hearted,
Came to me like shadows, like shadows departed;
But a day came that turned all my sorrow to glee.
When first I saw Willy, and Willy saw me.
The thought of my Willy is always a cheerer,
The wine has new flavour, the fire burns clearer,
The sun ever shines, I am pleased with all things,
And the crazy old world seems to go with new springs. . . .
If I get to be fifty may Willy get too,
And we'll laugh, Will, at all that grim sixties can do.
Old age! Let him do of what poets complain,
We'll thank him for making us children again;
Let him make us grey, gouty, blind, toothless, or silly,
Still old Ned shall be Ned, and old Willy be Willy.

HERE is a scrap from a letter of Thackeray's written in 1848, after the publication of *Our Street*, a popular "Christmas Book": "What a turmoil it is under which I live, laugh, and grow fat however. There's no use denying the matter or blinking it, now I am become a sort of great man in my way—all but at the top of the tree, indeed there, if the truth were known, and having a great fight up there with Dickens. I get such a deal of praise wherever I go, that it is rather wearisome to hear. I don't think my head is a bit turned, please God, for I have always got my own opinion, and when men and newspapers say *Our Street* is the finest, &c., I know a devilish deal better, and don't disguise the truth either. This London world is full of good-natured Tom Fools, and directly one begins to cry O, all the rest say Prodigious."

IN the *Christmas Books* volume are included "Mrs. Perkins's Ball," "Our Street," "Dr. Birch and his Young Friends," "Rebecca and Rowena," "The Kickleburys on the Rhine," and "The Rose and the Ring." Mrs. Ritchie, who quotes Mr. Swinburne's sonnet on Dicky Doyle, might also have given a stanza or so from Locker Lampson's verses on "The Rose and the Ring."

ONE of these *Christmas Books*, "Mrs. Perkins's Ball," has just been re-issued by Messrs. Smith & Elder, the edition being an exact reprint of that of 1847. For persons who can remember that year, and the appearance of the Mulligan therein, with all the other guests, this *facsimile* should excite lively emotions.

AMERICAN publishers have a fancy for changing English titles. Thus Mr. Conrad's *Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* became across the Atlantic *The Children of the Sea*. That was not a bad alteration. But we cannot see any merit in the extension of Mr. Pett Ridge's *Mord Em'ly* to *By Order of the Magistrate*. By such a name, however, Americans know the story.

MR. ZANGWILL, as reported in the *American Bookman*, concerning his preferences among American authors: "First there is the splendid style of James Lane Allen. Englishmen are pleased with his admirable use of words. Then, again, the sketches of Stephen Crane have pleased me, especially their colour. The stories of Mrs. Mary P. Judah are clever. Henry James has also interested me."

OUR review in last week's issue of the *Life of Lewis Carroll* ended with this riddle from that author's diary: "Invented what I think is a new kind of riddle. A Russian had three sons. The first, named Rab, became a lawyer; the second, Ymra, became a soldier; the third became a sailor. What was his name?" Many correspondents solve the problem. The third son's name was Yvan, because, as one of them writes, "if you reverse the letters of the respective names you get 'Bar' for the lawyer Rab, 'Army' for the soldier Ymra, and 'Navy' for the sailor. Hence Yvan."

THE number of correspondents who have kindly hastened to help us to the answer of Lewis Carroll's riddle has not only, we learn, put our reviewer to confusion, but proves how popular an exercise of intellectual ingenuity can be. Correct solutions have been received from E. F. H., E. S. C., W. T. H., E. W. L., J. M. C., G. S. L., A. L., W. F. C., D. W., H. T., R. B. T. B., M. P. F., G. W., C. J. M. A., G. M., E. J. S., T. W. S., R. P., T. O. M., G. H., E. R., W. T. T.-D., W. H. C., J. W. K., A. M. C., and C. F. M.

C. F. M., indeed, does more than solve the problem: he drops into verse. "May I," he writes, "offer your reviewer of *The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll* the following answer to the riddle he quotes:

Kindly critic, take your riddle
Where the maidens go to school;
You will find, to your amazement,
Little Alice is no fool.

She will take your printed letters
And consult her looking-glass;
Lo! within that magic mirror
You will see an answer pass.

Ymra so becometh Army,
Russian Rab is English Bar;
The solution, then, is Yvan,
Navy backwards names your tar."

Our reviewer is flattered by the compliment of verse, and humbled by the rebuke within it.

"W. H. C." adds: "Perhaps your reviewer could tell me the answer to a charade by Carroll published in the April *Strand Magazine*. That baffles me; and, indeed, I am more startled than stuck up by my present clairvoyance." Our reviewer cannot, we are certain, for his gifts lie in other directions; but we have obtained the *Strand Magazine*, and here reproduce the charade in order that our readers may have another trial of skill.

My First is singular at best
More plural is my Second:
My Third is far the pluralest—
So plural-plural, I protest,
It scarcely can be reckoned!

My First is followed by a bird,
My Second by believers
In magic art: my simple Third
Follows, too often, hopes absurd,
And plausible deceivers.

My First to get at wisdom tries—
A failure melancholy!
My Second men revere as wise:
My Third from heights of wisdom flies
To depths of frantic folly!

My First is ageing day by day;
My Second's age is ended:
My Third enjoys an age, they say,
That never seems to fade away,
Through centuries extended!

My Whole? I need a poet's pen
To paint her myriad phases.
The monarch, and the slave, of men—
A mountain-summit, and a den
Of dark and deadly mazes!

A flashing light—a fleeting shade—
Beginning, end, and middle:
Of all that human art hath made,
Or wit devised! Go, seek her aid,
If you would guess my riddle!

The only clue given by the author is in this notice:
"N.B.—FIVE POUNDS will be given to anyone who succeeds
in writing an original poetical Charade, introducing the
line 'My First is followed by a bird,' but making no use
of the answer to this Charade.—(Signed) Lewis Carroll.
April 8, 1878."

A FOURTH series of *Facsimiles of Royal, Historical, Literary, and other Autographs in the British Museum* has just been issued under the editorship of Mr. G. F. Warner, Assistant Keeper of Manuscripts. The new volume offers a wide selection of very interesting autographs, which are most capably introduced. We propose, week by week, to reproduce specimens from Mr. Warner's pages. This week we choose a passage from a letter of Daniel Defoe, written some time in 1704, after leaving prison, to Charles Montague, Lord Halifax, expressing gratitude for his favours, and anxiety to know the name of the unknown benefactor who had sent him money. The letter begins with characteristic bluntness: "Pardon me, my Lord, if to a man that has seen nothing for some yeares but the rough face of kings, the exceeding goodness of your Lordship's

discourse soften'd me even to a weakness I could not conceal." "The rough face of kings" is a phrase indeed. We quote the passage wherein Defoe expresses his intention of remaining an honest man, whatever may hap.

A REVIEWER who dearly loves a lord may be met with in the *Literary Gazette*, a youthful contemporary. The lord is Lord Ernest Hamilton, the author of *The Marokin of the Flow*, and this is the reviewer's opinion of the book:

This is certainly a novel in a thousand. It moves most powerfully the imagination and the heart. One rises from its perusal with glowing bosom and scalding tears. The art is of that kind that leaves the soul-satisfying impression of a miracle. In detail the incidents are ever unexpected and wondrous, the movement is as of an eddying water-race, and the passion is so true, expressed word upon word, that the heart is borne away as upon an irresistible tide. And, over all, is the heaven of unimpassioned restraint and dignity.

Analytic criticism, in this case, would be profanity. Here is art, in "mutual render" with nature. Wretched is the man who reads, and does not read this!

The review, to emphasise it more noticeably, is printed in italics.

AN amusing literary skit on somewhat ancient lines figured in a recent *Westminster Gazette*. "If they began," ran the argument, "their literary careers again, and were to seek review in 'Our Young Authors' Page'—a popular feature of many periodicals of the day—the result might be something like the following:

WIZARD (*Abbotsford*).—Not at all bad in its way. You evidently are well up in your Crockett. Go carefully over your work again, and see if much of it does not strike you as being somewhat tedious. If you are able to remedy this, you might try some second-rate boys' weekly with some chance of success.

R. B. (*Ayr*).—Your verses are pretty, but their language is somewhat out of date. A year or two ago you could have sold this kind of work, however inferiorly written, at your own figure. Unfortunately for you, we will not say for the public, the demand has now considerably weakened. However, send it to Mr. Mathews or Mr. John Lane; perhaps one of them might be of use to you.

P. B. S.—You write pleasant verse, but it rarely rises above the commonplace. Read some great poet, Austin

I Frankly Acknowledge to yo Lordship, and to y Unknown Rewarders
of my Mean Performances, That I do Not see y Merit They are Thus Pleas'd
to Vallue, The most I wish and w^d I hope I can answer for is, That I shall
allways Prefer the Homely Despicable Title of an Honest Man If This
Will Recommend me, yo Lordship shall Never be affam'd of giving me
that Title, Nor my Enemys be able by Fear Or Reward to Make me other
wise

for instance, and having read, ask yourself the question, "Where lies the difference between his work and mine?"

H. F.—Your story is really quite passable, but the name of your hero must be changed. Call him "Reginald Mortimer" or "Montmorency" something or other, but "Tom Jones" never. Try some young ladies' journal with a religious bias, and good luck attend you.

MR. W. S. HUNT writes: "Merely because I happen to have been looking through some old volumes of the *Illustrated London News*, and not at all because I pretend to know anything about these matters, I am able to tell your contributor, 'The Bookworm,' something about the subject of his last note last week. A play entitled 'Sir Roger de Coverley,' founded upon the 'Spectator' papers, was performed at the Olympic Theatre in the spring of 1851. The worthy knight was represented by William Farren ('Old Farren'), and his sons—the William Farren of to-day and Henry Farren, the father of Miss Nellie Farren—had each a place in the cast. I do not know who wrote the play, but a picture of a scene from it and some particulars will be found in two numbers of the *Illustrated London News* for May in the Great Exhibition year."

Bibliographical.

TURNING over the small pages of *The Bad Family, and Other Stories*, so happily reproduced for us by Mr. Lucas, I came across the tale of "Limby Lumpy," which opens thus: "His father was called 'the Pavior's Assistant,' for he was so large and heavy that when he used to walk through the streets the men who were ramming the stones down with a large wooden rammer would say, 'Please to walk over these stones, sir!' And then the men would get a rest." I wonder if the inventor of "Limby Lumpy" ever heard tell of the Oxford Fellow, Dr. Tadlow, whose obesity was the subject of so many epigrams? For example:

When Tadlow walks the streets, the paviors cry
"God bless you, sir!" and lay their rammers by.

In "Epigrams in Distich" (1740) we read of "a very fat man" that

The paviors bless his steps where'er they come.

So true it is that nothing under the sun is wholly new.

I see Messrs. Ward & Lock are advertising a story called *Hubert Ellis*, by "F. Davenport." Of course, that is a slip of the pen for "F. Davenant." I remember the tale quite well, because of the quaintness of its title, which, in full, was *Hubert Ellis: a Tale of King Richard's Days the Second*—an inversion for which there may, or may not, be authority. The work appeared serially in the *Boys' Own Magazine*, and seems to have been published in book form in 1865-66. Can anyone tell me anything about F. Davenant? The name sounds like a *nom-de-guerre*. Is he, or was he, the F. Davenant who published in 1869-70 a discourse called *What Shall My Son Be?* which apparently was reproduced ten or eleven years later under the new title of *Starting in Life*? The new edition of *Hubert Ellis* has to me the look of being printed from the old original plates. Am I right, I wonder?

The latest person to "reminisce," I gather, is Mr. Moncure Daniel Conway—to give him his full name—who is said to be in Paris putting his recollections upon paper. To the religious-minded public he is well known as a preacher and as the author of a large number of discourses more or less hortatory. In the department of literature he is most notable as the biographer and "introducer" of Hawthorne and Tom Paine, and as having published brochures on Mazzini, Carlyle, and Emerson. It will probably be news to most people that Mr. Conway is also a writer of fiction. Two novels—*Pine and Palm* and *Prisons of Air*—and *A Necklace of Stories* are all placed to his credit, though I must confess to not having read them. Another work of his in the miscellaneous way is *Travels in South Kensington*.

Miss Blind's *Ascent of Man*, of which a new edition is promised for next spring, first saw the light in 1889. It ran to only 110 pages, and is but a series of poems, in different forms and rhythms, arranged in three sections. It will not make a very big volume. Nor will the "Shakespearean Sonnets," which are also promised for the new year, if they are printed alone. They figured in Miss Blind's volume called *Birds of Passage*, and are only eight in number. They could, however, be readily reinforced by other sonnets by Miss Blind, who, apparently, was fond of the sonnet form, and certainly handled it with some measure of skill. We already possess, by the way, a selection from Miss Blind's poems. Why not bring out a collected and definitive edition in one volume?

Says "The Baron de Book-Worms" in *Punch*: "When the Baron was a boy, did he not revel in Ainsworth's *Dick Turpin*, in the same author's *Jack Sheppard*, and in Bulwer Lytton's *Claude Duval*?" In Ainsworth's *Jack Sheppard*, no doubt, the Baron did revel; but Ainsworth, of course, never wrote a tale called *Dick Turpin*—he called the story *Rookwood*; while as for Bulwer's *Claude Duval*, surely it was of that writer's *Paul Clifford* that the Baron was thinking.

I have read several obituary notices of Mr. William Black, but in none have I come across any reference to his solitary incursion into the *belles lettres*, apart from fiction—his monograph on Goldsmith in the "English Men of Letters" series. It is just twenty years since this appeared, and everybody, I think, recognised the sympathetic spirit in which it was conceived and written. It made no great mark—it was, perhaps, one of the fullest items of the series—but it had, nevertheless, a pleasing and a kindly air.

Outside of fiction, I fear, Mr. Black was not particularly great. I do not mind confessing that, of late years, I found it difficult to read his stories. I remember very acutely the pleasure I derived from *Love and Marriage*, *In Silk Attire*, *Kilmeny*, *A Daughter of Heth*, *A Princess of Thule*, *Macleod of Dare*, and *The Strange Adventures of a Phaeton*; but of his later works I could master only a few pages. *The Strange Adventures of a Houseboat*—how terribly flat it fell! And *Judith Shakespeare* and *Sunrise*—was it not only too apparent that in these cases the writer was out of his depth?

THE BOOKWORM.

Reviews.

Two Devotional Books.

THE ENGLISH THEOLOGICAL LIBRARY (General Editor, Rev. Frederic Relton; with General Introduction by the Lord Bishop of London).—*William Law's "Serious Call."* Edited by Rev. J. H. Overton. *Bishop Wilson's "Maxims of Piety and Christianity."* Edited by Rev. Frederic Relton. (Macmillan.)

THE announcement of a new "English Theological Library" reminds us of the old famous "Library of Anglo-Catholic Theology," and of the stirring Tractarian times from which it issued. The new venture will hardly prove as solid and massive as the old, nor will it appeal exclusively to a like class. The Bishop of London, who contributes a General Introduction, writes that

English theology is penetrated by the same spirit as distinguishes the English character in other branches of literature. It is strong in sound and massive learning, and has never had reason to separate itself from other departments of English thought. It has no style of its own, and is not expressed in technical language, nor clothed in special phraseology. Its great products rank among the noblest specimens of English prose, and its literary merits are of a very high order. It may be read by readers of every class.

An interesting advertisement, though rather of literature than of theology, which, as a science, requires scientific treatment and exposition, even at the sacrifice of grace and charm. Anglican theology, except in the hands of such as Bull, tends to show every excellence but the essential excellence of being, indeed, theology, precise, systematic, orderly, defined. The present Library opens with two notable names of saintly men, in whom the Anglican Church does well to glory: William Law, 1686-1761; and Thomas Wilson, 1663-1755—writers known and loved by many without their own communion, and the younger of the two a man of genius rare in quality. The works selected are *The Serious Call* and *The Maxims*, neither of which professes to be, in a strict sense, a theological work, but both works are rich in devout argument, exhortation, and appeal.

Canon Overton, the editor of Law, quotes many significant testimonies to the profound effectiveness of his writings upon very various minds, but he omits one of the most impressive. At the end of a long conversation, Keble turned to Hurrell Froude, the young Marcellus of the Oxford Movement, and said: "Froude, you said just now that you thought the *Serious Call* a clever book; it seemed to me as if you had said 'the Day of Judgment will be a pretty sight.'" Words could not do ampler justice to the supernatural solemnity of what is also among the wittiest of books; to the almost Dantesque decisiveness, unsparingness, yet withal tenderness, of this eighteenth century work, written in a Laodicean age and country, of which, writes Newman, "Hoadley was the bishop, and Walpole the minister, and Pope the poet, and Chesterfield the wit, and Tillotson the ruling doctor." Its aim and scope are simple: it asks those who "call and profess themselves Christians" upon what possible grounds

they are content to be tepid, half-hearted, lax, unaspiring Christians; what possible reasons there can be for such an attitude; whether it is not an attitude of gross absurdity, extreme peril, heartless ingratitude; and this with a dramatic wealth of observation, a knowledge of human nature, an intensity of feeling, which make the pages throb with life. The veriest worldling can chuckle over its pungency of satire, its incisiveness of detail; Hogarth in holy orders could not have employed touches more masterly and telling than did this mystical parson, who fed his soul upon the theosophy of Behmen and lived athirst for perfection. Impatient by nature of inferiorities, he came to exult in Christian humility, as the crown of terrestrial glories; he lashed the world and its insane pretensions. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, that saint *manquée*, persuaded the Duchess of Buckingham to hear Whitefield preach. Her Grace was deeply disgusted and profoundly shocked: "It is monstrous to be told that you have a heart as sinful as the common creatures that crawl on the earth. This is highly offensive and insulting; and I cannot but wonder that your ladyship should relish any sentiment so much at variance with high rank and good breeding." Stupendous! But there, in an extreme form, you have the eighteenth century Christianity, which roused Law to laughter, indignation, pity, tears; the Christianity of decorum, propriety, moderation, of *surtout point de zèle*. Law was no early Methodist, no pioneer of the Evangelical Revival; the champion in the Bangorian controversy, the stout Nonjuror, the advocate of clerical celibacy, the high sacerdotalist and sacramentarian, had nothing in common with Evangelical "enthusiasm," except its passionate insistence upon practical Christian living. He saw that neglected, not only by "notorious evil-livers," but by the masses of unconscious Pharisees, who thought themselves exemplary Christians, or at least good enough. His great book is a gallery of portraits, superbly drawn in a series of "characters." Every one is there: the fat pluralist, the Church-supporting millionaire, the classical scholar, the back-biting devotee, the ambitious mother, with many more, all "not as this publican," yet all leading lives of ludicrous inconsistency, the worse for being unconscious. Stroke by biting stroke, line upon delicate line, the characters are set forth, until the reader almost feels for them, and then falls to confess with blushes that it is a case of, *mutato nomine*, himself. And there are the contrasting portraits, lovingly, ardently drawn of the consistent man and woman. There is no forbidding sternness in them, austere though Law was, but an infinite sweetness and graciousness of tone. And these passages abound with vivid glimpses into the social life of Law's time, its devotions, frivolities, pursuits, customs. His book would live, if not upon other and higher grounds, for its intrinsic liveliness and vivacity of detail. One would very willingly, though not without some fear and trembling, have known Law, with his strangely intense spirit, his keen vision of this world and of the next. When he fell under the sway of Behmen "the inspired cobbler of Görlitz," Law taught himself High Dutch, that he might know "the original words of the blessed Jacob." The average bishop of the day would have thought him mad. He had more in common with an earlier generation; with such

men as Henry More, Cudworth, Norris of Bemerton. The *seculum rationalisticum* was his congenital, not his congenial home. Posterity has done rightly in considering the *Serious Call* his masterpiece, though there are some to whom his Behmenist writings make an even more intimate appeal, as in that rich treatise, the *Spirit of Prayer*. From first to last he was a great and distinguished master of words: he writes with a happy mean between the earlier carelessness and the later correctness, and his style allures us on. His influence has been deep, and sometimes secret; but there is probably none of the religious leaders, by speech or writing, since his day, who has not been indebted to him for a quickening of the spiritual sense. A terrible sincerity is in him, scathing shams and shaking humbugs; and above that the eagle vision piercing through the heavens, the lonely flight toward truth. We think of him with a fearful respect, as one dwelling in converse with eternity; his Church can boast no servant of more august a memory and a presence.

So special a reverence, so unique a veneration, does not invest the person of the good Manx bishop. Like Bishops Andrewes and Ken, he had most winning gentleness and charity of character, but not, like Law, genius. It is possible that he may in certain points have been the better man: he is certainly not the less lovable. But he had not that touch of the live coal from the altar which inspired the speech of Law and gave him his place among the prophets. Perhaps Wilson could hardly be better described than by saying that he had for his fellow-student in Dublin his exact opposite, Jonathan Swift. Wilson knew trouble and sorrow, but he shows no trace of *sæva indignatio*: he had no hunger for dignities and preferments, no care for fame in courts and coffee-houses, and the Isle of Man sufficed him for the exercise of skill in affairs. There, for more than half a century, he spent a patriarchal, paternal life, and a fresh fragrance of innocency and resignation clings to him in his island home, far removed from the crowd of courtier clerics suing for advancement. A scholar, but not of the "Greek play bishop" type: a man of genuine culture, who made all his knowledge subservient to the good of others. His present editor, Mr. Relton, accepts Arnold's judgment of him, and we do not need to be reminded how warm and true was Arnold's enjoyment of his spiritual wisdom. A recent writer has said that it illustrates Arnold's occasional canonisation of platitudes as pearls of price; that was a shallow and incompetent writer upon such matters. Arnold's judgment was at least not hasty: he writes to his mother of the "Maxims," that it is his "constant companion," that he has been "reading, re-reading, and re-rereading" it, that it is "delightful to me, and just the sort of book I like." But Arnold read it in a far from satisfactory edition, and Mr. Relton's is the first edition thoroughly convenient and complete. These "Maxims," written by way of a private, spiritual, commonplace book, are, as it were, the overflowings of the bishop's reflection upon his reading, or the compendious record of his meditation. They seem to convey the essence of the man's holiness and wisdom; the thoughts of a ripe and tranquil spirit versed in sacred things, firm in conviction, but no lover of disputation. There is an Izaak Walton peace-

ableness and serenity of accent in these calm utterances, so quietly cunning in their unfolding of oracles and inculcation of pieties, and always with an eye to the facts of life. There is little to startle by its strangeness, yet the thought is constantly fresh and living, as of one who has felt and known: it comes from the depth of a great personal peace. *Cor humanum in desiderio eternitatis non fixum nunquam stabile potest esse*, says Augustine: Wilson's heart was stable, established. It is less for their positive doctrine than for their beauty of atmosphere that we cherish these sayings: they are a place of refreshment. Things are here said so quietly and simply and directly, with no attempt at the appearance of profundity, that the profundity, once realised, has an effect more lasting and searching than any epigram. Like the personages of Greek tragedies, the bishop has but to say that death is certain, or that sorrow is discipline, and some quality of simple seriousness in the saying arrests us. Assuredly, Thomas Wilson is one of the world's "white souls."

If the subsequent volumes of the Library maintain the high standard in editing and annotating of these two, there will be no cause to complain. Among the volumes in preparation are works by Butler, Hooker, Jewel, Laud, Whichcote. It is to be hoped that the series will include some of the less known and less accessible writers, especially those of the seventeenth century, who often have a literary value obscured for that foolish fellow, the general reader, by their theological themes. And it might be well to include the work of laymen—a beginning might be made with a version of Henry VIII.'s *Assertio Septem Sacramentorum*, for the limitation of the undertaking to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seems arbitrary. But, in any case, nothing can exceed in value the works with which the Library has made so promising and prosperous an opening, nor will it be easy to find names which carry more "perfume in the mention" than those of Thomas Wilson and William Law.

The Inversion of Romance.

The Last Ballad, and Other Poems. By John Davidson. (Lane. 4s. 6d. net.)

MR. JOHN DAVIDSON, say the critics, is one of the thinkers amongst modern poets. It is quite true; more's the pity. Like Cassius, he "thinks too much": wearies himself with the problems of a problematic age. And the result is fatal to his art; not, of course, necessarily to art in the abstract, but to the particular type of art that lies within the potentialities of Mr. John Davidson. For reflective thought, indeed, he has no capacity; philosophy was left out in his composition; and when he begins to probe the dark places of conduct his moral sense too often proves itself a very blunt and fallible instrument. On the other hand, in the direction of lyrical romance he has very considerable gifts. His impassioned narrative, in the simple ballad metre he affects, can be uncommonly good; and in suffusing with emotion the fragrance and colour of out-of-doors he excels. He is by birth a romantic and a *paysagiste*, not a sage. These qualities and these defects are abundantly illustrated in his new volume. "The Last

"Ballad," which is the story of the madness of Lancelot and of his recovery from it, is admirable. The theme and even its symbolism were given or suggested by the sources; the service of the king and the inspiration of the queen, the quest of the Grail to whose spirituality the lover of Guinevere may not aspire, the sty of sensual despair into which he only temporarily sinks. And what could be better than the swing and the sentiment of such fine stanzas as these?

And yet not all alone. On high,
When midnight set the spaces free,
And brimming stars hung from the sky
Low down, and spilt their jewellery,
Behind the nightly squandered fire,
Through a dark lattice only seen
By love, a look of rapt desire
Fell from a vision of the Queen.

From heaven she bent when twilight knit
The dusky air and earth in one;
He saw her like a goddess sit
Enthroned upon the noonday sun.

In passages of gulfs and sounds,
When wild winds dug the sailor's grave,
When clouds and billows merged their bounds,
And the keel climbed the slippery wave,

A sweet sigh laced the tempest; nay,
Low at his ear he heard her speak;
Among the hurtling sheaves of spray
Her loosened tresses swept his cheek.

And in the revelry of death,
If human greed of slaughter cast
Remorse aside, a violet breath,
The incense of her being passed

Across his soul, and deeply swayed
The fount of pity; o'er the strife
He curbed the lightning of his blade,
And gave the foe his forfeit life.

Against "The Last Battle," which is one of Mr. Davidson's successes, may stand "The Ordeal" as one of his failures. Here he tries to read his own interpretation of life into a characteristic romance motive:

Between the Golden City and the sea
A damasked meadow lay, the saffron beach
And silver loops of surge dis severing
The violet water from the grass-green land.

Before Emanuel, King of the Golden City, Sir Hilary accuses his wife, Bertha, of falsehood to him with her ancient sweetheart, Godfrey of the Phoenix. The lady is traduced, that is quite evident, and Godfrey offers to maintain her honour in battle. The lists are set. You wait for God to vindicate the right. And Bertha's children wait.

Since God Himself had hung His balance out,
Already they could hear the host of Heaven,
With psalteries and far-resounding songs,
Acclaim their mother's starry chastity,
And laud the righteous Judge of all the earth.

Godfrey is the better man, and has the better cause, but when the shock of arms comes, he goes down before the spear of Sir Hilary. In "the eclipse of her renown" that follows, Bertha offers to undergo herself a new ordeal, the

ordeal of the heated ploughshares. This is accepted and the preparations are made. And thus it ends:

The farriers,
Aglow, begrimed and moist with smoky sweat,
Their ready pinchers on the coulters clasped
And plucked them forth, sprinkling the dewy green
With jets of dying embers. Placed apart
At intervals irregular, the nine
Deep notes of carmine pulsed in unison
Upon the hissing turf. Trumpet and drum
Announced the ordeal; then softly raised
A funeral dirge as Bertha, breathing quick,
Set out upon her march. She placed her foot,
Her naked buoyant foot, dew-drenched and white,
She placed it firmly on the first red edge,
Leapt half her height, and with a hideous cry,
Fell down face-foremost brained upon the next.

You see the intention; to arraign the theory of Providence, to deny the triumph of good. But how crudely it is all managed, so that the purposed irony afflicts the soul as with a stroke of sheer brutality. Some years ago Mr. Hardy did the same kind of thing in *Tess of the Durbervilles*, and incurred criticism which, whatever its ground metaphysically, had none on the side of art. But then Mr. Hardy knew how to present his case. And in particular he gave it a setting which might pass as a transcript from reality. Of course, reality is more brutal than romance. Mr. Davidson, on the other hand, takes the most conventional of all forms of romance, the chivalric romance, and attempts to invert the whole ideal of it. But the whole conception of an ordeal, unless you take the philosophy that underlies it seriously, is firstly silly, and secondly revolting. Over these mental and moral difficulties Mr. Davidson is hardly the man to come victoriously. Naturally enough, he only succeeds in producing a sense of painful burlesque. Even Shakespeare only produced a sense of painful burlesque when he, too, tried to invert a romantic convention in "Troilus and Cressida."

The minor poems which make up this volume are not as interesting as Mr. Davidson's minor poems are wont to be. His rhythms of the visible face and the audible voice of nature are wanting. But you find him troubled by the war-spirit, and not quite knowing what to make of it. And you find an appreciation of the "money-lord," which also halts between two opinions. On the other hand, "A Ballad of a Coward" has some ringing stanzas, and this dialogue of the artist and life pleases us both by its rhythm and its sentiment:

THE MERCHANTMAN.

I have lamps that gild the lustre of noon;
Shadowy arrows that pierce the brain;
Dulcimers strung with beams of the moon;
Psalteries fashioned of pleasure and pain;
A song and a sword and a haunting tune
That may never be offered the world again.

THE MARKET-HAUNTERS

Dulcimers! psalteries! whom do you mock?
Arrows and songs? We have axes to grind!
Shut up your booth and your mouldering stock,
For we never shall deal.—Come away; let us find
What the others have got
We must buy, buy, buy;
For our money is hot,
And death draws nigh:

Either Mr. Davidson reads his proofs very badly, or he has trouble with his English grammar. On one page we find that "Him whom I adore . . . has wandered over sea"; on another that a ring clasps "a horde . . . of memories"—presumably "a hoard."

Pitt in Private Life.

Pitt: Some Chapters of His Life and Times. By the Right Hon. Edward Gibson, Lord Ashbourne. (Longmans. 21s.)

New materials for a great biography, discovered after that biography has been written and accepted as final, are difficult to deal with. If they are printed alone, not the best editorship can prevent them from seeming thin; for they cry to be grafted on the parent trunk. Lord Ashbourne's difficulties have been of the kind we should have expected. But he has not added to them. He has come upon whole nests of letters of Pitt, his mother, his elder brother, and of many of the great personages—including George III.—with whom Pitt had to deal. In particular, he has explored a large collection of Pitt papers at Orwell Park, the home of Mr. Ernest G. Pretyman, M.P. Many of the choicest letters in this volume are labelled "The Pretyman MSS." We must take a short way with a long matter. It is impossible for us to discharge our ideal task of comparing and relating all these new materials with Lord Stanhope's standard *Life of Pitt*, or with Mr. Lecky's great work, or with Lord Rosebery's. Despite all Lord Ashbourne's attempts—and they are successful attempts—to present his treasures in an interesting way, the book before us is essentially supplementary to these works, and it should be read side by side with them. Our own duty is defined by the possibilities of space; and we shall hope to indicate the character of Lord Ashbourne's book by confining ourselves to some new rays which it throws on Pitt, the boy, the man, the son, and the lover.

One of the first letters produced by Lord Ashbourne is a breezy and touching letter which the Earl of Chatham dispatched after his favourite son when the youth was on his way to Cambridge to enter himself at Pembroke Hall. Pitt was then under fourteen years of age. The Earl writes:

We compute that yesterday brought you to the venerable aspect of Alma Mater, and that you are invested to-day with the Toga virilis. . . . How happy, my loved boy, is it that your mama and I can tell ourselves there is at Cambridge one without a beard, and all the elements so mix'd in him, that nature might stand up and say, *This is a man*. . . . Adieu, again and again, sweet boy, and if you acquire health and strength every time I wish them to you, you will be a second Samson, and, what is more, will, I am sure, keep your hair.

Pitt's relations with his family were always of a kind most honourable to him. Let any reader who wishes to feel himself in contact with a fine and balanced nature, in which all the elements were mixed, read the letters in which Pitt, as Prime Minister, informed his elder brother,

Lord Chatham, of his wish that he should vacate his position in the Admiralty. Lord Ashbourne justly says that these letters convey the decision of a Prime Minister with the love of a brother. The correspondence between the brothers cannot profitably be quoted here; but it shows how Pitt could place his duty to the country before every other consideration. It shows, also, that the particular charge brought against Pitt, of being too ready to give important posts to his brother, is rather ill-founded. He could give, but he could take away. Lord Ashbourne, however, seems to push the advantage to Pitt's memory rather far when he proceeds to suggest that Lord Chatham may have been in part responsible for Pitt's well-known financial difficulties. Lord Ashbourne writes:

The embarrassment of Pitt's finances has often been criticised, and an explanation been asked how a bachelor, leading a most regular life, with no expensive tastes, and in receipt of £10,000 a year during the later years of his administration, should have often been in difficulties. His friends had to come to his rescue when he resigned office in 1801, and Parliament voted £40,000 to pay his debts on his death. It is just possible that he may from time to time have assisted his brother with money, and thus helped to add to his own difficulties. The following document amongst the "Pretyman MSS." is suggestive: "Hyde Park Corner: August 18, 1797. Received from the Rt. Honble. William Pitt the sum of £1,000, payable immediately after the 5th Janry., 1798. Chatham."

We are rather surprised that Lord Ashbourne thought it worth while to make this suggestion; it is so slight, and so little affects the known facts about Pitt's finances. The weak spot in Pitt's character need not be veiled. It was not personal extravagance. It was a certain regal carelessness of lucre. Macaulay's well-known indictment is at once merciful and severe.

Lord Ashbourne gives us some charming new letters which passed between Pitt and his mother, and between her and Mr. Wilson, Pitt's first tutor. These letters show how Lady Chatham watched over her son. "My young, great man," she calls him, when he had been already Prime Minister for two years. In 1784, just before the general elections, on which Pitt's fate hung, she wrote to Mr. Wilson:

The rough and rude attacks upon William have happily only served to show how equal he is in every superior quality to that important situation to which he has been so honourably call'd, and in which he wou'd be continued if the general voice of the people prevailed. . . . As much delighted as I have been with all and every part of his conduct, I have never allow'd myself to break in upon his time by sending him a letter to read, which wou'd only have told him what he was perfectly sure was in his mother's heart and soul.

Lady Chatham had sometimes need to write to her son on business she would fain have suppressed. Thus, Lord Ashbourne has found a letter in which Pitt comes to the rescue of his mother when she wanted a little money. This letter, dated from Downing-street, reads very pleasantly alongside a letter, included in Stanhope's *Life*, which Pitt had written to his mother fifteen years earlier

from Cambridge. We have thought it worth while to bring these letters together. Thus:

PITT, THE UNDERGRADUATE.

Pembroke Hall,

Nov. 30, 1778.

My dear Mother,

I am much obliged to you for thinking of my finances, which are in no urgent want of repair; but if I should happen to buy a horse, they will be soon; and therefore, if it is not inconvenient to you, I shall be much obliged to you for a draft of £50, which I think will be sufficient for the current expenses of this quarter.

All Pitt's experience of home life, all his observations of the happiness of his parents, must have inclined him to marriage. His own temperament, however, did not so incline him. His feelings toward the opposite sex were cold and respectful from the first; they were also blameless, even in his youth. It was only in his thirty-eighth year that Pitt thought of marriage. His figure, which was

PITT, THE PRIME MINISTER.

Downing-street,

Nov. 11, 1793.

My dear Mother,

I trust I need not say that my first wish must always be to contribute to your ease and convenience, and I am only sorry you should have given yourself so much trouble where a single word would have been sufficient. I can furnish, without difficulty, three hundred pounds, and will immediately desire Mr. Coutts to place that sum to your account.



THE LADY WHOM PITT DID NOT MARRY.

handsome, his fame, which was dazzling, and his morals, which were spotless, must have commended him to noble women. They commended him to the Honourable Eleanor Eden, the eldest daughter of Lord Auckland. To this young woman Pitt must have seemed the Prince of all fairy Princes. Lord Ashbourne writes:

She never heard his name spoken of save with reverence, respect, and admiration; and when he singled her out for his special notice, and in his visits to Eden Farm walked and talked with her, one can well understand how pleased and flattered she must have been. And when he spoke to her with that exquisitely modulated silver voice, which had commanded the House of Commons and swayed it from his early manhood, which had dealt with great topics on great occasions, and when she realised that that

voice was now being used to please her, she must have been moved. His whole career, too, was so striking, so dramatic; he had fought such great fights against such great men—his courage was so splendid; and then he was so delicate, his life was so lonely. Was there not much to win the sympathy and the regard of a generous girl?

Pitt walked and talked with Eleanor Eden at her country home at Eden Farm, in Kent, Lord Auckland's residence. Pitt's own home was at Holwood, close by, but he had formed the habit of exchanging its coldness and solitude for the Aucklands' cheery circle. The Holwood country was pleasant and undulating, and was overlooked by the heights of Sydenham on one side and by those of Knockholt Beeches on the other. Here, in 1796, Pitt lingered from care, and rumour began to be busy. Even Burke wrote to a friend: "The talk of the town is of a marriage between a daughter of Lord Auckland and Mr. Pitt, and that our statesman, our *premier des hommes*, will take his Eve from the Garden of Eden." The situation was delicate and interesting in a high degree. As Lord Ashbourne says: "There had never been before in England an unmarried Prime Minister of thirty-eight, apparently paying attention to a handsome girl, and there never was a more *bond fide* occasion for rumours." But the event which had cast its shadow never came. Pitt, we know not why, decided not to propose to Eleanor Eden. Unfortunately he had taken up a position which—undefined as it was—had to be definitely and openly abandoned. Pitt took the course of writing to Lord Auckland. His two letters to that nobleman must have cost him terrible pain. The pith of his communication is contained in the following sentences:

It can hardly, I think, be necessary to say that the time I have passed among your family has led to my forming sentiments of very real attachment towards them all, and of much more than attachment towards one whom I need not name. Nor should I do justice to my own feelings, or explain myself as frankly as I think I ought to do, if I did not own that every hour of my acquaintance with the person to whom you will easily conceive I refer has served to augment and confirm that impression; in short, has convinced me that whoever may have the good fortune ever to be united to her is destined to more than his share of human happiness.

Whether, at any rate, I could have had any ground to hope that such might have been my lot I am in no degree entitled to guess. I have to reproach myself for ever having indulged the idea on my own part as far as I have done without asking myself carefully and early enough what were the difficulties in the way of its being realised. I have suffered myself to overlook them too long, but having now at length reflected as fully and calmly as I am able on every circumstance that ought to come under my consideration (at least as much for her sake as my own), I am compelled to say that I find the obstacles to it decisive and insurmountable.

So vanished into thin air and vain regrets Pitt's only love-story.

We have left ourselves little space in which to touch on Pitt's last days. Here, too, we gain new material while missing the grand dramatic effect in Lord Stanhope's *Life*. Lord Ashbourne's pages will certainly multiply students of Pitt's career, and they will freshen in many minds the memory of his splendid qualities.

The Sunset of Shelley.

The Last Days of Shelley: New Details from Unpublished Documents. By D. Guido Biagi. (Fisher Unwin.)

THE "new details" of which Mr. Biagi speaks were, we believe, published a few years ago in *Harper's Magazine*; and the present book consists substantially in a reprint of that article, preceded by a recapitulation of the facts already known concerning the closing days of Shelley. The new details will be of undoubted value to future biographers of the poet; and Mr. Biagi must be congratulated on the zeal which has led him to undertake these timely researches at the eleventh hour, before the last remaining witnesses of Shelley's cremation shall have followed him into "the dark, dark land." They fall into two classes: documents, drawn from the archives of Tuscany and Florence, concerning the discovery of the corpse, and the negotiations of the poet's friends for its possession and disposal; and depositions of the old fishermen and other local persons who witnessed the last scene on the beach at Viareggio. The first class correct some errors of date with regard to the course of the negotiations with the Italian officials; they establish, also, the place where the body was cast up. The second class establish the exact spot of the cremation, and prove very clearly that Trelawny's account, written from memory, gives a very loose and idealised description of the locality, containing many errors. In fact, he is altogether misleading with regard to its situation.

It will be seen that these new facts, however thankful we must be for them, possess little interest for the general public. But the story of those last days in the solitary house at Casa Magni is ever fresh and pathetic; nor does it lose anything in Mr. Biagi's retelling. It has, indeed, a peculiar interest in the mouth of an Italian. Italy, that beloved land of our poets, has been consecrated to English poetry by the lives and deaths of so many of our singers, who have there found a second country, often a grave. Crashaw, Shelley, Keats, Robert and Elizabeth Browning, all sent their last breaths to mingle with its lovely air. Browning, after passing his widowerhood in England, hasted back there to die; Keats, if unregardful England claimed his life, Italy claimed his death. Byron barely missed dying on that soil, the funeral-bed of English poets. The singers of the strong and virile North love to lay their heads, at last, in the womanly lap of the beautiful land.

Nor has Italy been mindless of her lovers who loved her much, these Saxon poets from the land where the White Sea-horse looks out upon its brothers of the sea. Shakespeare inspires her musicians, her actors; Shelley has inspired her poets. Leopardi loved him; Mr. Biagi quotes Carducci's praise of him:

A Titan's spirit in a virgin's form.

And Mr. Biagi inherits their love for the radiant poet whose sun set in the waters of Lerici. He notes that Shelley from the first seemed marked by the sea for its own. From his youth he loved to watch the drifting of paper boats down a stream, and thought that to get into one of them and be drowned would be the most beautiful

of deaths. Thrice he had narrow escapes from shipwreck; once flying with Mary Godwin across the Channel, once with Byron on the Lake of Geneva, and again with Williams in Italy. But the sea and ships only absorbed him with a more fatal fascination, though he was luckless with all his boats. They were female ships, he said, and perfidious like women. It should rather be said that the boats avenged on him his own inconstancy with women. He drove his first wife to the death which at last fell upon himself. He prophesied it, though none has noted the prophecy. In *Julian and Maddalo* he makes Byron (Maddalo) address to him a jesting warning:

You were ever still
Among Christ's flock a perilous infidel,
A wolf for the meek lambs.

And the warning concludes:

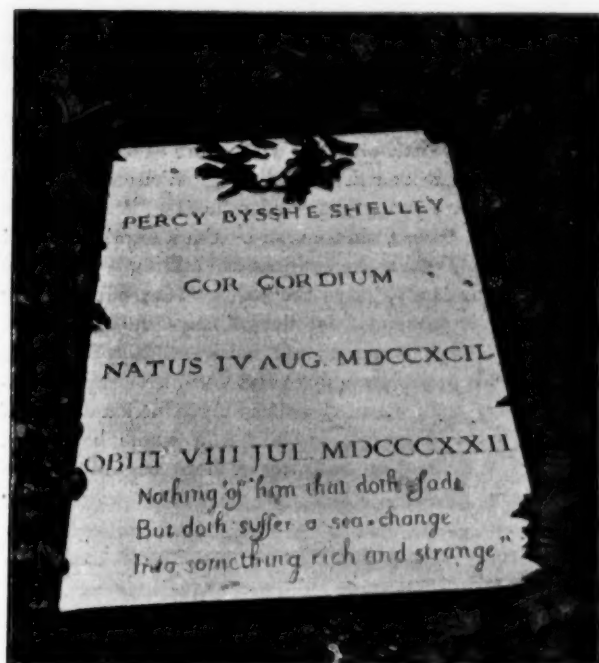
Beware, if you can't swim.

A prophecy more fatally sinister for its very levity, its unconsciousness of hastening destiny. In a fast nearing day after those words were published to the world Shelley, who could not swim, was washed—a half-fleshless corpse—upon the sands of Viareggio.

There came to him at Pisa the man who was to help him to his fate, a one-time sailor, then a soldier, Captain Williams. Enough seaman to stimulate Shelley's own doomed desire for the waves, too little seaman to save him from their power. On May 1, seventy-six years ago, the fatal beauty of Casa Magni drew them from Pisa, and there came to them from the building yards of Genoa the schooner they had designed for their death. Byron had christened it the *Don Juan*; but they cut the name out of the mainsail and rechristened it the *Ariel*. The shadow of the fate sitting in its shrouds fell upon Mary Shelley: she was oppressed with melancholy, the woods overshadowing the house gave forth to her a nameless horror, the dwelling itself she hated. It was a comrade of the fatal sea, which washed into the very porch, and showered its spray upon the walls. For five weeks Shelley lived upon the sea, putting forth during fine weather in a flimsy boat, and during the stormy weather in the *Ariel*, defying the repeated warnings of the fishermen. When he was not at sea he read or wrote poems to Captain Williams's wife, the famous Jane. Once he lured the unlucky woman with her children into his cockle-shell of a boat, rowed her out to sea, deaf to her prayers and entreaties, and then blissfully proposed that they should go together to "solve the great mystery." She persuaded him to put off the solution (which was apparently to include the poor children), and escaped with a terrible fright. Clearly, as the Scotch say, he was *fey* of the sea.

He was not long to wait for the solution he desired. With the coming of Leigh Hunt to Pisa all was over. Shelley crossed to meet him, and then returned to Leghorn, where Williams and he boarded the *Ariel* for the sail back to Casa Magni. In vain they were warned that a hurricane was imminent. For five weeks they had despised all warnings; and they despised also this—the last. They put off in company with two feluccas. Trelawny, from the deck of Byron's yacht, watched the doomed *Ariel*. "They are mad," said a Genoese sailor, "to put up that

sail in this weather." Mad indeed! Williams was sailing the vessel to his death. The Genoese pointed to the foretold hurricane coming up black from the sea, with a line of smoking water before it. Too late, the schooner began to take in sail. The cloud overspread the feluccas, overspread the *Ariel*, and all vanished in eclipse and darkness. In a few minutes the squall passed. Trelawny looked, but where the *Ariel* had been there was speckless sea. Soon the clouds gathered again, and the hurricane blew all night; but the *Ariel* and her poet had already gone down to night eternal. She was probably run down by one of the feluccas in the storm.



SHELLEY'S TOMBSTONE AT ROME.

Of the sad waiting and despair of the two lonely women at Casa Magni for many days, until the body of Shelley was washed ashore at Viareggio, and that of Williams on the Tuscan coast, the pitiful tale has been told by Trelawny. He, too, has told of that scene on the beach before the pine-wood, when the body of Shelley in the blazing furnace was reduced to grey ash, all but the heart. Snatched by Trelawny from the flames, it was given by Leigh Hunt to Shelley's widow—the dead heart to the broken heart. The story is told at length in these pages. Let us add that the book is adorned with several interesting photographs.

She.

At His Funeral.

They bear him to his resting-place—
In slow procession sweeping by;
I follow at a stranger's space;
His kindred they, his sweetheart I.
Unchanged my gown of garish dye,
Though sable-sad is their attire;
But they stand round with griefless eye,
Whilst my regret consumes like fire!

From Thomas Hardy's "Wessex Poems, and Other Verses."

The Last Word on the Borgias.

History of the Popes. From the German of Dr. Ludwig Pastor. Edited by F. J. Antrobus. Vol. VI. (Kegan Paul. 12s.)

DR. PASTOR'S access to the secret archives of the Vatican gives him opportunities not possessed by previous historians, and he has supplemented this by zealous research in the archives of other Italian cities. His fairness and patience have likewise been generally acknowledged. The present volume, however, has a peculiar interest, for it deals with two popes who, for very diverse reasons, are among the most attractive of all to the historian. The second of these is the fiery and potent Julius, the expeller of the French from Italy, the recapturer of the Papal States from Venice, the patron of Bramante, Raphael, and Michael Angelo. The first is Alexander VI., the battle-ground of controversy, the bearer of the dark and perfidious name of Borgia.

The reign of the Spaniard, Rodrigo Borgia, is, in the line of the Papacy, something what Nero's is in the line of the Roman emperors. He was a profligate, and seventy; with one foot in the grave, he thought of nothing but the advancement of his son and family. But his worst crime in the eyes of posterity is that this son was Caesar Borgia. It is impossible, even in the calm pages of Dr. Pastor, and for the eleventh time, to read the story of Caesar without a dark fascination. He had boundless power over his father. The old Pope made the whole policy of the Papacy subservient to Caesar's plans. For him he joined with France, made war and peace, betrayed friends and conciliated enemies. To provide Caesar's armies he diverted the revenues of the Church, and even gave up to him the contributions from the Jubilee. It was a vast opportunity for this young Spaniard, not thirty; but his plans and his ambition were vast enough for any fate. It would almost seem that he aimed at nothing less than the gradual conquest of Italy. The most accomplished traitor of his age, he never used force where fraud would succeed; ruthless and bold, he was ever ready and able to complete treachery by the sword. Made a cardinal, he secularised himself and took a dukedom, to execute his projects. By the aid of the French he began the conquest of the Romagna; deprived of their aid, he bided his time and completed it for himself. Advancing from conquest to conquest, he seized Urbino and Cesena. His mercenary captains leagued against him, and placed him at the point of ruin. He broke up the league by cunning negotiations, and then, by a supreme stroke of crafty perfidy, seized the chief of them in a trap and put them to death. In Rome he was the true king, and did what he would. If a too free-spoken man issued a pamphlet reflecting on him, the result was a corpse, punched with stabs, floating in the Tiber. Bologna was in his hands, and he meditated completing the conquest of Central Italy. He needed funds to raise a sufficient army. There was a conveniently rich and old cardinal; the rich old cardinal was taken violently ill and died in great agonies. It is not well to be a rich old cardinal under such circumstances. And it all came to nothing! Before he could join his army the

Roman malaria struck down both him and his father. The Pope died, and Caesar recovered too late, to find his power vanishing like a summer cloud. After a succession of vexations and imprisonments, he died in the petty quarrel of a petty prince, stripped of all his conquests, ruined of all his once dreaded might.

As to the wretched Pope, Dr. Pastor's judgment should be final. His opportunities of research have been exceptional; he is a Catholic, whose labours have been encouraged by the present Pope. And in the main, he sternly sweeps away attempts to whitewash Alexander. He disposes, indeed, of the charge that Alexander died from poison which he had prepared for another; he shows that, personally, the Pope was forbearing and in no way cruel; and he rejects the infamous calumny about Alexander's relations with Lucretia. But he is severe upon the worldly tendency of Alexander's policy, his constant advancement of his own family, and his criminal compliance with Caesar's projects in particular. Finally, he places beyond dispute the immorality of Alexander's private life. He shows that the Pope himself, in a Bull which was kept secret, acknowledged Juan Borgia as his son, begotten during his term of the Papacy. And he accepts as authentic Burchard's too famous account of the "convivium quinquaginta meretricum." Allowing for possible exaggeration of details, he considers it certain that Alexander was present at an undoubtedly scandalous dance. It is a sufficiently terrible indictment, when all unsupported charges have been cleared away; and henceforth the case of Alexander VI. should be considered closed.

An American Illustrator.

Sketches and Cartoons. By C. D. Gibson. (Lane. 20s.)

MR. GIBSON'S drawings are witty, epigrammatic. They shine. They have charm, and grace, and distinction, and that touch of exaggeration which is the salt of so much good talk. Mr. Gibson's young women are taller almost than Du Maurier's, and they are such queens. He sets their heads on their necks and their necks on their shoulders with such splendid decision and nicety. His men have the peculiarity over the men of other "society" artists that they suggest reality. Each has his personality. They are types, may be, but the individual divergence from the type is there too. In this book Mr. Gibson is at his best: his hand has never been more sure, his humour never more keen. The majority of the jokes touch upon love, to which the satirist stands in an attitude almost paternal. "Bless you, my children," he seems to say; "but permit me to extract fun from the situation too." Where lovers are excluded, his wit is more caustic. In one picture a girl meets a tired soldier. "Welcome home!" she cries. "Are you one of our heroic 71st?" "No," he replies sadly; "no, I ain't no hero. I'm a regular." And here is another vein: two children are talking—"Give me a bite of your candy," says the boy. "No; but you may kiss me while my mouf is sticky," says the girl. Mr. Gibson is always dexterous and incisive, always in perfect taste, and his grouping is masterly. We give, by permission of Mr. John Lane, a reduced reproduction of one of Mr. Gibson's daintiest pages. The whole book is a delight. We know of no better or more beguiling occupant of the occasional table.



WHERE DOCTORS DISAGREE.

FROM C. D. GIBSON'S "SKETCHES AND CARTOONS."

Postscript.

MR. WALTER CRANE'S *Flora's Feast* will be remembered as one of the daintiest picture-books of recent years. He has now provided a worthy successor in *A Floral Phantasy* (Harper).

In an old-world garden dreaming,
Where the flowers had human names,
Methought in fantastic seeming
They disported as squires and dames.

That is the argument, the lines accompanying a drawing of Mr. Crane on his back on the lawn. Then comes the tourney, and finally we have Mr. Crane again, taking a goblet of wine with one of the flowers.

There is probably very little about prisons and prisoners that Major Arthur Griffiths does not know. He is one of Her Majesty's inspectors of prisons; and he has been a governor; and his interests are centred in the subject. Hence he is the right man to make a book entitled *Mysteries of Police and Crime* (Cassell). This work, in two large volumes, lies before us, and it is full of desultory entertainment. Open it where you will, and there is something sufficiently interesting. We light, for example, on the following good story:

What a practised burglar may do with a safe, using ordinary weapons, I have myself seen with my own eyes. When I was building Wormwood Scrubs Prison (1877), as I was handing my keys to the gatekeeper for consignment to the prison safe, he, through some mischance, hampered the lock, and could not open the safe. I waited some time impatiently, as I was expected elsewhere, but to no purpose. The safe could not be opened, and until it was not only must I remain on the spot, but so must every other official. It is a strict rule that no one can leave prison until the keys are collected and safely put away. At last, in despair, I turned to the chief warder and asked, "Have we any especially good cracksmen in custody?" "There is K—, sir," he replied promptly, "one of the most noted housebreakers in London; doing fifteen years. He is employed just now in the carpenter's shop." The man was fetched. He was tall, dark-haired, rather good-looking, a clean, industrious, well-behaved prisoner. He brought with him his bag of tools, and, showing him the safe, I asked him quietly if he thought he could open it. "Do you mean it, sir?" he asked in his turn; and, when I assured him I was in earnest, he attacked the safe with one of his tools. In less than three minutes the door swung open; the lock had been quite conquered. It was a first-class safe too.

Fond parents who believe their first-born to be a prodigy of intelligence will be interested in Mrs. Hogan's *Study of a Child* (Harper), the most elaborate account of a baby's intellectual progress that we have yet seen. America fosters such studies, and this is American. Here is the kind of thing: "On November 17th he said 'tummer-glass' for tumbler." "February 18th—He used 'I' for the first time to-day. He is almost two years old. He said, I use 'Pears's Soap.'" "March 12th—This morning he said to his father when he left, 'Good-bye, poppee; see you soon again.'" Mrs. Hogan's hints on child-study in the home should be useful to all persons who wish to prosecute child-study in the home. The book has five hundred reproductions of this particular child's drawings. They are not good.

Fiction.

The Associate Hermits. By Frank R. Stockton.
(Harper. 6s.)

MR. STOCKTON is not adding to his reputation. He does not, we think, give himself time. He seems to believe that, once having hit upon its comic idea, the book is practically done; whereas no book is made by inventing ideas, but by treating them. Books have to be written. In the work before us the initial comic idea—that of a bride's father and mother leaving for the honeymoon as soon as the wedding ceremony is ended while the bride and bridegroom remain at home—is not really part of the book at all; but, having hit upon it, Mr. Stockton has identified the first half of the volume with it; and the comic idea upon which the second half depends—that of everyone in a certain community allowing their individuality to develop as it will, and offering no resistance—is not made as much of as it deserved. We feel almost with every page that had Mr. Stockton spent as many months as weeks on this story it would have been so much the better.

Yet it has pleasant things of its own. Peter Sadler, the autocratic hotel proprietor, is a worthy addition to Mr. Stockton's gallery of oddities. The "Bishop" is another, although after enlisting our sympathies for him it was a cruel thing to give him in marriage to such a bore. And Mrs. Perkenpine's discovery of the route in which her individuality would prefer to travel is really good reading.

"What else did you find out?" inquired Matlack.

"I found out," she answered with animation, "that I admire to read anecdotes. I didn't know I cared a pin for anecdotes until I took to hermickin'. Now here's this paper; it came round the cheese, and it's got a good many anecdotes scattered about in it. . . . If I had a man I'd let him smoke just as much as he pleased, and just when he pleased. . . . If that was his individdlety, I'd say viddle.

The main story is a love-story, after Mr. Stockton's own undeviating type; that is to say, all the persons concerned strike one as playing at life rather than living it in earnest. But plausible unreality is Mr. Stockton's stock-in-trade. It is when he takes too few pains to be plausible, as often in this book, that he is disappointing.

Katrina: a Tale of the Karoo. By Anna Howarth.
(Smith, Elder & Co.)

"THERE'S a divinity that shapes our ends" is good Shakespeare, and a good enough text from which to defend the old-fashioned plot on which the author of *Katrina* has strung her story. We have the generous, quiet, misunderstood elder brother, Allan, devoting himself to save from ruin Charlie, the sly, selfish, popular younger brother. Allan's devotion even extends to marrying his brother's jilted fiancée, Katrina, to stave off a threatened breach-of-promise action. The ethics are slightly muddled here; but those who would jump to the conclusion that Katrina was vulgar or servile must remember that she was a Dutch girl, and that she had a wicked uncle whose word was law. She is a very pathetic figure, and the dawn of her love for her husband and his for her is

described with womanly touches of moving tenderness. Such a marriage ought not, morally speaking, to turn out well, but one is glad this one did; and then everything else in the story is so splendidly in accordance with poetic justice and the reputed ways of Providence! The Dutch uncle, whose barbarity was as bad as that of the uncle in *The Babes in the Wood*, is killed by a poisonous reptile almost on the scene of his victim's death. Charlie, whose embezzlements and perfidies are outrageous, is so injured by a horse whom he has lamed that he is crippled for life. The directness of the author's style and the admirable clearness of her descriptions lift the story out of the ruck where so many melodramas lie flat. We may mention the account of a small-pox epidemic where the combined brutality and fatalism of the Dutch farmer and the heroic efforts of an Englishman on behalf of the helpless Kafirs, &c., are illustrated by a few graphic scenes. But for quotation let us take a few lines from the chapter on "the great drought":

"The sun shone with persistent brilliancy, . . . the bush shrivelled up and grew brown, and all the earth looked like the top of a deal table. . . . Crops there were none; the ground had been impervious to any plough for a year. . . . The dams were dry; the rivers were dry, except for a pool here and there, so salt and brack that the miserable animals, which were driven miles to drink out of them, were screaming with thirst again before they reached their kraals."

But the drought broke up:

A resurrection could hardly be more stirring. . . . Life from the dead, green herbs for withered sticks. . . . The earth was awake; . . . the busy ants came up once more, running hither and thither in apparently aimless haste; the tardy tortoise came forth from his inscrutable hiding-place; . . . and the karoo, that wonderful karoo, which never dies; . . . in three weeks from the time it lay, from one end to the other, a wilderness of lifeless sticks and stones, had clad itself in every part with a robe of vivid green.

Neil Macleod: a Tale of Literary Life in London. By L. Gladstone. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

"This is the true experience of a young author and a faithful picture of literary life in London to-day," says the author introducing his book. Well, the literary life of to-day has many sides. Neil is but pruning his wings in the kailyard of a Scotch school, when behold! a firm of lawyers write that a patron of letters "has instructed us to place to your credit in whatever bank you may specify a considerable sum of money," to "be used in the furtherance of your literary ambitions." He appears duly in London, and is at once installed as first favourite of a literary lady of title; the only credential he carries to Lady Edwards's "at home" being an advance copy of his book, *Mist of the Hills*. Talk of neglected genius! they seem to have begun to lionise this one as soon as they saw the cover of his book; and the reviewers, popularly supposed to be incredibly cold and unsympathetic, bowed down and worshipped the callow kailyarder at sight. The *Chronicle*—really the *Chronicle* right out—gave him "a prominent and early" column under the heading "A New Star"; sub-

editors, critics, and their kind rushed pell-mell at him—and so on, and so on. The style, though simple, is poor; it is entirely lacking in richness and elasticity. Those who are really engaged in literature will, however, read into the novel a humour which the author did not intend.

Notes on Novels.

[These notes on the week's output of fiction are not necessarily final. Reviews of a selection will follow.]

OLD CHESTER TALES.

BY MARGARET DELAND.

Eight short stories by the author of *John Ward, Preacher*. They are transcripts of village life. "In saying 'Old Chester,' says the author, 'one really means the Dales, the Wrights, the Lavenders. . . . it means the Temple connexion. . . . it includes the Jay girls, of course, and the Barkleys. . . . The Norman Smiths, who own a great mill in the upper village, have no real connexion with Old Chester.' For the rest, Old Chester was self-satisfied, and called innovations 'airs.' On this basis Margaret Deland erects her pleasant stories, 'Good for the Soul,' 'Sally,' 'The Unexpectedness of Mr. Horace Shields,' and the rest. (Harper & Brothers. 6s.)

UNPARALLELED PATTY.

BY THOMAS GRAY.

This is a tale of London life—the adventures of two young men among Sunday-night clubs, studios, millinery establishments, and theatres. Unparalleled Patty does many spirited things. She becomes a nurse, and this is her complaint: "In the last fortnight no less than three patients, two of them young men and the third an old gentleman, all of whom had been given up by the doctors, said to me, 'Kiss me once, Nurse Hilda'—that's my nursery name—and I'll die happy,' and just to soothe them I kissed a little kiss. Two of them died, which was all right; but one of the two young men recovered, and he's going about now quite well and strong. Don't you think it's a great shame?" (Leonard Smithers. 3s. 6d. net.)

ALONE.

ANON.

This is described as an introspective novel. It is certainly that. More bewildering pages we have seldom scanned. We read on p. 65: "Then the thought came to me how to show my fear of God; it is very easy to say, I thought, but how can it be shown. Then I took to biting my cheek. I had three places. The left inside of my cheek was the highest place, where I bit for my great sin and my great love. . . . I had the right inside of my cheek for my other sins. . . . My cheeks got very sore . . . even now when I put my teeth together a lump of gum always comes between them; but it is pleasant, I like it." (Leonard Smithers. 6s. net.)

THE HUMAN OCTOPUS.

BY GAINSFORD SOMERS.

The sub-title is: "Or, By the Rivers of Babylon." For the benefit of naturalists who may hasten to point out that the octopus does not proceed inland, it should be remarked that Mr. Somers's title is not to be taken literally. By octopus he figures the monster Speculation—gambling, betting, and competition—and his book is to some extent allegory. The story, which is of modern life, has a strong flavour of transpontine melodrama. (Simpkins & Co. 6s.)

DIVIL-MAY-CARE.

BY MAY CROMMELIN.

"Divil-may-care" is the hero. He was known also as Richard Burke, sometime adjutant of the Black Northerners; and Miss Crommelin's story tells of his rollicking adventures. It is Irish through and through, and is partly true. "Divil-may-care" tells his yarns in the first person, and they are very spirited. The last sentence in the book is seasonable: "I'd like some plum-puddin'." (F. V. White. 6s.)

The Academy.

Editorial and Publishing Offices, 43, Chancery-lane.

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The ACADEMY is published every Friday morning. Advertisements should reach the office not later than 4 p.m. on Thursday.

All business letters regarding the supply of the paper, &c., should be addressed to the PUBLISHER.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.

The EDITOR will make every effort to return rejected contributions, provided a stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed.

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The Bell that Spoke to the Soldiers.

A Christmas Story.

(From the French of "Art. Rou.")

THE time and place were equally wild—midwinter in a dark, mysterious forest in that part of Russia still unknown to the rest of Europe, Old Russia beyond the Volga.

In this wild scene, some men—muffled, heavy-looking and furry like wild animals—were journeying under the whitened branches and sparkling foliage which hung like a very fairyland of ice and sunshine over the gloomy group. The leader, a few steps in advance, anxiously scanned the horizon; the others, huddled together, whistled and sang, sticks in hand, long pointed objects, doubtless bows, on their shoulders. Four of them bore a litter, on which were dimly seen some objects half covered with snow—metal implements which jingled together, a heavy hairy mass, and behind all the dogs, dumb and passive, followed the hunters in expectation of a meal. Are these pre-historic men? Sons of Cain, sharing their father's punishment? No, merely soldiers of the present day, a detachment of those sharpshooters who are practised in marching, skating, hunting, bivouacking, who hunt the bear in European forests, the tiger on the frontier of China, and the panther in Turkestan. These men, furnished with tea, salt, and biscuits, and possessed of a saucepan and chafing dish, had been living in the forest for a week; what they carried in their slings were not bows, but long Finnish snow shoes, which they wore when needed to skim over the untrodden snow; on the litter was a bear, slain on the way, but the living cub, nestling under his dead mother, whined and snuffed about; he sought for the teats

and pressed them in his pink mouth, astonished to find them cold; lifting the lifeless paws, so lately battling in his defence, he waved them, seeming to impart to them some of the life which unites nurse and nurseling. "We must put him down," said one of the bearers, changing his pole from one shoulder to another.

No one protested, each having his share of burden and fatigue. The forsaken animal at first followed, still moaning; the dogs turned towards him inquisitively with one paw raised and ears pricked up; then he halted, ran again, at last stopped, a little black ball fading away in the short twilight.

Long though they had wandered over this treacherous snow, the officer still marched on; compass in hand, he steered for the north, anxious to find shelter on this Christmas Eve. Night, however, coming on while they were still in the wood, they pitched their tent, banking it round with snow for warmth, and went to sleep, their heads under canvas, their feet to the fire, leaving one soldier to watch. He towards midnight began to tremble at the strange sounds which came out of the darkness and solitude; the branches of the fir-trees creaked, sighing breaths seemed to pass by; then an invisible wing touched a branch and sent down a glittering, powdery shower. Driving away these fancies, the soldier seeking for comfort recalled his old village home. He saw himself again a little boy, carrying a paper lantern in the shape of a star, and bounding over the snow from cottage to cottage singing "Christ is born—Christ from highest Heaven! Christ is born on earth! . . ."

His voice used to fail towards the end of the verse, but then people gave him kopeks, and he ran on again singing. . . .

He thought of this, feeling his childhood very near and his parents very far away. Looking up with a sigh, he watched the sparks flying towards the branches rosy with reflections from the flames, and then vanishing in the black night. There were no stars overhead; that which had guided the Magi shone not on these soldiers seeking their God. But suddenly a distant and unearthly bell mingled its ringing with the other sounds; with a thin tender sound it sang, as the angels had sung, the same hymn of peace and goodwill.

"Hark! Listen to the music!" he said, rousing the comrade who was to watch next; but the other, still drowsy, heard only the crackling of the flames and the drip of the melting snow. Left alone in his turn, his watch was nearly over when this voice from church or monastery rose, and rang for matins, he listening in amazement.

"It was here!" they said next morning; "no, it was there!" They pointed east and west, to the forest and the thicket. "Or perhaps up there," added the doubting officer; and thinking this celestial bell had but sounded in the moujik's dreams, he was going to order them to fire a volley, when the mysterious bell rang again from the north; its music broke the stillness, its pean winging its way into the dark recesses of the forest. In a clear voice, changing and repeating, or, rather, with a thousand voices which mingled together, it rang out, "Salvation offered, life regained, mankind redeemed. . . ."

"Listen, listen; it speaks!" the soldiers said to each other. Crossing themselves, they marched joyfully forward; the dogs, barking, burrowed in the snow. All at once they sprang forward, scenting space and freedom. The bell ceased at that moment—its work of calling them was done: they had now reached the edge of the wood.

The late wintry sun rising above the trees shone on a sea of mist and frost which, opening in front of them, formed a small haven. Round a church crowned by five green cupolas were old buildings with narrow windows, and a detached bell-tower with gilded dome. An enclosure fortified by earthworks extended to the frozen brook, and limited this peaceful view.

Two sturdy lay brothers, startled at the sight of guns, hastily shut the gates, which closed with a grinding noise.

"Wait, good soldiers!" they cried, taking off their caps, through fear or politeness. "We will presently bring you the Abbot's blessing."

They retired into the closed and silent court, full of bygone memories. Many a Christmas had passed there accompanied by the sound of the bells, winters chased by spring, generations following one another in that monastic life unchanged by the visits of Death; through these slight barriers one felt close to the Past.

"In the Name of the Father and of the Son, welcome," said a monk, solemnly turning the key.

The softness of the air, the smell of the wax tapers, the incense evaporating surprised these rough wanderers on the threshold of the church; they saluted and thanked the sacred images, the monks, lastly the Abbot, grave and patriarchal.

"Thanks also to your bell," added the officer; "it called us to you."

"Yes, yes, she likes soldiers; we have even been soldiers once ourselves. Search in our stores, you may still find some muskets. As for the bell, she is a good servant of the Emperor, a veteran of the old wars. . . ."

Long ago—the year in which our community was formed—she was cast, and of a strange metal! Some Novgorod sailors brought to shore a wreck, with a cannon on board; out of this cannon the bell was made, and brought new to our new monastery.

For a century she summoned to the House of God pilgrims, travellers, vagabonds, and exiles—any who were in trouble. Our brethren hung her in the tower where you see her, and, only using her on great occasions, rang a smaller bell for daily service.

Then came the days of Peter. A courier appeared bringing grave news of the defeat at Narva, which obliged the Emperor to increase the army. Orders were sent everywhere that guns should be given up from the ramparts of the towns, that useless bells should be melted down or sent to the Imperial foundries to be turned into culverins, big guns, or falconets.

The fortunes of war demanding a sacrifice from us, it must be one worthy of the Emperor. Our brethren did not hesitate. 'Let us melt down old Jeanne of Novgorod,' they agreed; 'she has already been a gun, she has smelt powder.' Chanting a psalm, we lowered her from the belfry; she, meantime ringing short strokes like a knell, at last rested on the ground. One might have thought

her an old Boyar, regretting home, and gloomily preparing to obey the summons to war. We had then in the monastery—perhaps we have it still—a melting-pot; our brethren did the work themselves.

Ah, captain! what a fine gun came out of the mould! And just the Imperial calibre: they had reckoned exactly. She was marked with the arms of Moscow, a verse of Scripture, and the name of our community, as a means of identifying her. Even so our brethren could not leave her to chance; they gave her for gunners two novices who had been in the world, and were by no means novices in fighting. The Abbot in signing their instructions wrote that the gun was ours, that we only lent it to the Emperor. One of the brothers painted a picture of St. Barbara, to be nailed on the carriage, and they promised never to forsake the 'Vigilant,' but to bring her back to the monastery some day, by the help of God and the Tzar. And so, blessed by the Abbot, they started one morning.

Years passed away; they still remembered Sister Jeanne, but had given up hope of ever seeing her again, when the day came for Peter to fight the battle of Poltava. Our novices still accompanied our bell—I mean our gun—in short, the 'Vigilant.' They put her in position for the battle in this region of Ukraine. In front was a wood with a clearing, in which was a trench, as they make them for fighting; you know better than I. They pointed her at this spot, and were well inspired, for that was where the enemy first appeared. Already two of our regiments had given way; the 'Vigilant' was in the thickest of the fight, when the Tzar himself charged, to stop the onslaught of the Swedes. It was then that our bell shot down the enemy's standard. Our novices sprang forward to seize the banner, but could not succeed, so jealous of it were the Swedes. They fought well, those Swedes; otherwise how would they have beaten our men at Narva? Our brethren, then, only brought the plume of the flag to the 'Vigilant.' They tied it round her neck: it was her own trophy.

So our gun sounded the glory of God on that battlefield; but when all was over, our gunner brethren did not forget their duties as monks. The whole army extolled the victory; there were songs and music. The Emperor, radiant, rode in front of the artillery, and all his men, blackened with powder, cheered him. Ours were so bold as to kneel in his way; but just when they were going to present their petition they lost their heads.

'Peter Alexowitch, give us back our bell!' cried these boobies, without even addressing him as Tsar.

'Rise, soldiers!' said Tzar Peter, reading their paper of instructions. 'Is your Archimandrite so miserly, then, as to claim this piece of metal from his Emperor?'

One replied: 'He lent it in the time of your necessity, your Imperial Majesty; he asks for it again the day of your glory.' And the other: 'In time of war the "Vigilant" sounds the alarm; but in time of peace she rings prayer and pardon.'

What passed at this moment in Peter's heart? He went away, carrying their paper, and they never saw him again. But the following day, rewarded, thanked, and with certificates as good gunners, they returned to the monastery, and with them the gun, bearing a pennant

with these words of the Emperor's in silver letters: 'Ring, Jeanne the Vigilant, sing the victory of Poltava!'"

The brethren that night feasted their guests in the refectory—white bread, eggs, sour cream, salted mushrooms, fish caught from under the ice, mead and other drinks, abounded on the tables. It was a Christmas feast, genial and happy. The panes of mica in the pointed windows shone into the distance, and like large kindly eyes looked placidly into the solitude; within, the flickering flames of the candles lighted up the painted figures on the arches, and revealed a company of saints in this paradise. One seemed to see their hands stretch out to bless.

Then, the night over and mass sung, the soldiers, before starting, came in a body to salute the "Vigilant." They admired the Imperial inscription, the fragment of the Swedish banner, and on the bell's bronze surface the new sign she bore; the founder had stamped her this time with the arms of Smolensk—a gun, on which is perched a bird unfolding her wings. This bird, in the form of a dove, here represents the Holy Ghost. The bell, however, still warlike, responded with a murmur to the voices of the newcomers; when they touched her with their fingers, she resounded, at first like the distant echo of a cannon, at last producing in their ears a murmur of prayer and benediction.

Some, to give the "Vigilant" a present worthy of her, wished to gild her all over; others, more moderate, spoke of buying her a silver clapper, or simply a rope of yellow and black silk, the colours of St. George. But as they were poor, and possessed nothing but their good hearts, they remembered one must not give away what one has not got; nor, as the proverb says, sell the skin of a bear which still runs: their offering, then, was the skin of the bear they had killed the day before. Then, putting on their long snow-shoes, and hopping over the snow like a flock of sparrows, they harnessed themselves to the litter—once again a sledge—and went away delighted with their offering: the fur was thick and large—it would completely cover Jeanne—and under its shelter she would not suffer cold.

A Hero for Novelists.

JAMES TYSON, the Australian stockman and millionaire, who has just died at the age of seventy-six, deserves the attention of novelists. He was of the school of Diogenes. He lived simply and roughly, he kept himself to himself, and he saw straight. His words were few and practical. To the very end he worked hard day by day; he never exchanged his flannel shirt for a linen one; he wore always ready-made clothes; he washed not with soap but with sand, because that was a bush custom of his youth. He had never sworn, he had never tasted alcohol in any form, he had never entered theatre, public-house or church. In a Christian age he was a pagan; in a self-indulgent age he was an ascetic. He was slender and tall, measuring in his youth six feet four inches; to the end he was active, and at one time was the best mower in Australia.

He did not desire the company of women. Once, when he was twenty-three, he saw the only woman whom he could have married; but he did not ask her to marry him. He haunted the neighbourhood for twenty years until her marriage took place, and then he departed. He was not a woman-hater, as report said, but he considered women as other men consider foreigners. "He thought," says the writer of the interesting memoir of Tyson in the *Times*, "that they needed more robustness and simplicity alike of body and mind." He thought they were not fair to other women. He thought that wives were "a deal for husbands to bear." He was called a miser, but he was not one. He was merely careless of most things that money can buy, and, therefore, did not spend it. When he gave money away, he did so in his own style. "Near one of his stations [we quote from the *Times* memoir again] it was considered desirable, in the interest of the local population, to erect a little iron church. He was asked to pay for it. He replied that he had no objection, but on one condition only—namely, that the whole bill of costs was to be made out and presented for payment in one sum, and that he should not be bothered by requests for future contributions. The condition was accepted, and he gave a cheque without criticism for the full amount of the estimate presented. The following year, on his return to the station, the responsible authorities approached him again, remembering his condition, and apologising for breaking it, but saying that a most essential item had been forgotten. They begged that he would, therefore, reconsider his determination, and give them £20 more for a lightning conductor. His reply was an emphatic negative. 'That I will not,' he said. 'I have given a church to Almighty God, and if He cannot take care of it for Himself He does not deserve to have it.'" This was not miserliness, it was strength. The Church needs such lessons now and then.

He made money surely and continually, but he cared nothing for it. "I shall just leave it behind me when I go," he would say. "I shall have done with it then, and it will not concern me afterwards." "But," he would add, "the money is nothing. It was the little game that was the fun!" Being asked once, "What was the little game?" he replied, with an energy of concentration peculiar to him, "Fighting the desert! That has been my work! I have been fighting the desert all my life, and I have won! I have put water where was no water, and beef where was no beef. I have put fences where there were no fences, and roads where there were no roads. Nothing can undo what I have done, and millions will be happier for it after I am long dead and forgotten." The joy of the little game was continually in his thoughts. Asked towards the end of his life whether he had ever been happy, he replied, with a certain brave simplicity: "Sufficiently so. I am persuaded that attainment is nothing; the pleasure is in the pursuit, and I have been pursuing all my life. Yes, I consider that I have been happier than most men." And, again, he spoke of his joy in the little game when the question of religion came up. With theology he would not concern himself. "It ain't my business. I do what I think seriously right; I stand to take my chance, and I have no fear." Pressed with the

obvious question, "Why do you do what you think seriously right? Why not drink and play the fool like other men?" he had an answer which satisfied himself. "You see, the fun is in the little game. Every man who chooses has his little game, with a fair chance of winning if he keeps straight. It is better worth his while to do what he seriously thinks right. If he don't he is bound to lose. Yes, I believe every man has a good chance of winning. That's enough for me; the rest don't concern me; I don't think of it."

He was stoic through and through, save that he had no sense of the beautiful. But no stoic ever kept duty more persistently before him. At the age of seventy-one it was suggested that he should take the first holiday of his life and travel to England and other countries. He dismissed the project as being too idle and self indulgent. A complete life of James Tyson would be a treasurable book.

Some Younger Reputations.

"George Paston."

"GEORGE PASTON" is a woman—one of the many women writers who have succumbed to the mysterious attraction of the name "George." It is a little difficult to guess why she should have chosen to hide her sex under a masculine pseudonym; for in the first place she could hope to deceive no one, and in the second place no woman-author is more acutely, more quiveringly, more completely a woman than she. One must set it down as a whim.

Half-a-dozen novels stand to her credit, together with a deal of miscellaneous journalistic work. The first of the novels, *A Modern Amazon*, was a two-volume affair; it had some wit and a general readableness, but it did not specially disclose the bent of her disposition. In the six years that have passed since its publication, that bent has, however, been clearly revealed. *A Study in Prejudices* showed it first, and *The Career of Candida* and *A Writer of Books* have made the fact perfectly plain that "George Paston" is what is known as "a writer with a purpose."

We do her no injustice when we say that she is not primarily interested in fiction. It happens to be the accepted vehicle for thought, and so she uses it—and uses it very cleverly. But she does not, we think, care for it. Had she lived early in the century she would have written essays. What does interest "George Paston" is the question of "woman's rights"—the inequality of women with men before the law and before social custom. The existing condition of affairs, whether right or wrong, arouses—not her indignation, for she is too serene to be actively indignant, but—a certain calm, mordant bitterness of spirit, a bitterness which is coldly resentful against men, and which despises women while it pities them.

This is not the place to examine "George Paston's" theories. We are concerned only with their effect upon her fiction. That effect is two-fold—beneficial and deleterious. The theories give sincerity and seriousness, but they disturb the balance, and they woefully narrow the outlook

upon life. All "George Paston's" work lacks breadth, and it is all palpably prejudiced—at least in contemporary masculine eyes. Moreover, the fundamental imagination at the bottom of the work is not strong enough to support the strain to which it is subjected. In other words, when "George Paston" has most need to convince she does not succeed in doing so. A novelist's imagination, if only it be sufficiently powerful, can play strange tricks with circumstance and yet compel us to overlook the trickery. "George Paston" is too cold for that feat; intellect will not compass it. The result is that her supreme catastrophes, those misfortunes which overtake her virtuous women and those spells of depravity which overtake her average men, have an air of being concocted, of being forced into their place in the story.

Nevertheless, all her novels are redeemed, and generously redeemed, by the wit and the alert agile intellectuality which permeate them. If as novels they have faults, they are the best "woman's rights" pamphlets ever written. You cannot make fun of "George Paston's" theories; she would turn the sneer against you in a minute. You may laugh with, but not at her. She convinces—and in the lighter passages she is nearly always convincing—by a combination of wit and stiff logic which is invariably delightful. In dialogue she excels; her conversations are full of invention and surprise. And not only her wit, but another quality sets her solitary among those women writers who deal with "sex." She writes English—clear, concise, and correct, and has a very unfeminine horror of any sort of carelessness in composition.

"Zack."

THE novelty about "Zack's" work is that she, a woman, is chiefly occupied in trying to depict the actions and the passions of men. She is, in her way, a sort of inverted Richardson. Just as Richardson is more old-maidish, more elaborately feminine than even Miss Austen, so "Zack" is more aggressively, more fiercely, virile even than Mr. Kipling.



MISS KEATS ("ZACK").

For the extreme characteristics of her manner one naturally looks to her longest story, "Life is Life," which gives the title to her book. The central thing in that story is plainly Atter's confession to his son. Atter is the unbridled male animal, as dangerous as an elephant gone must; and what "Zack" sets out to tell you, in Atter's own vehement words, is how this animal feels himself daunted by the "line" drawn against him by the simple physical indifference of a girl in a class above him, who never conceives the possibility of his passion for her. "Zack" expounds in a kind of lyrical passage the revolt of this strong brute, who has always had his way with women, against this impalpable resistance; the conflict not

so much between desire as between the masculine will to subdue and this instinct that forbids him to use violence; and she gives the victory to will. One is prepared to admit her psychology if one postulates an extraordinarily strong brute in an extraordinary fever of sexual excitement—the elephant gone *must*, in short; but having chosen this subject, “Zack” feels bound to lead up to it by a succession of brutalities. The scene in which Dick Atter meets his son, neither knowing the other, and the father blinds the boy, goes entirely beyond belief. We do not particularly feel the objection which has been urged against this scene, that here the authoress, adopting in their crudest form all the doctrines of realism, has held also to the old formulae of melodrama and stretches the long arm of coincidence. What we do feel strongly is that “Zack’s” temperament leads her into violence of statement and style, and that she would do well to avoid subjects of this sort for the future. If the life of mining camps or the treatment meted out to blacklegs in the Australian bush has to be written down, let it be written as Bret Harte would write it, with a sense that the violence of the events needs to be lightened. Bret Harte assumes the whole atmosphere and writes of these things as the most natural occurrences; “Zack” uses every artifice in her power to heighten the violence of her narration. For this reason we should recommend anyone who wanted to see her best work to read “Rob Vinch’s Wife,” “The Widder Vlint,” or “Travelling Joe.” All these are subjects that need to be treated quietly and with reticence, and “Zack” in them does not attempt the exclusively masculine emotions. For a man’s interests she has the keenest feeling: the fascination of outdoor life and the hunter’s instinct which makes men poachers was never better put by anyone than in “Bob Vinch” or the beginning of “Life is Life.” Here imagination is based upon the closest observation; but the essence of her work is and always will be imagination. The best of her work is very good indeed. “Travelling Joe” might stand comparison with Daudet’s inventions, and some of the secondary things in “Life is Life” show a remarkable power to create, and a sense not merely of the tragedy of life, but of that resisting power in the human spirit which can convert the worst ruin into a mischance. “Zack” would probably accept Maeterlinck’s philosophy, that we make all of us our own tragedies, and that where there is a wise heart, like the umbrella-maker’s, tragedy is impossible.

The Coming of Revolt.

I have been passive;
I have submitted to the law,
And I have seen
The tide of life flow from me
To return, bringing
But sea-weed
And the dead I loved.
Still have I held my peace,
Believing in the law,
Until this hour.

Paul Kester, in the American “Bookman.”

John Stow:

Tercentenary of His “Survey.”

JOHN STOW, whose *Survey of London* was published just three hundred years ago (probably to a month), began life as a tailor: There has come down to us a very pretty



JOHN STOW.

report of a sixteenth century shindy in front of his shop in Cornhill. Like all men who are different from their fellow-citizens, and reject what others seek after, it was Stow’s fate to make bitter enemies. Men who would have retired before a simple tailor would dare to affront a tailor who wrote histories. One William Ditcher did this. Ditcher set his

apprentice to fight Stow’s apprentice, and, standing by as a spectator of the affray, abused Stow roundly, called him a pricklouse knave, and charged him with making a *Chronicle* of lies. He recited instances of Stow’s bad behaviour (as he deemed it) to the crowd, and miscalled Mrs. Stow; and finally, growing quite mad, said he would charge Stow’s apprentice with having killed the man on the Miles’ End in Whitsun-week. Stow, who was really widely respected, haled Ditcher before a magistrate; and it is from the report of this affair that we learn with certainty the nature of Stow’s occupation. In time he laid down his needle to become an author, and, by natural progression, a beggar.

We need not wince at the thought of Stow’s poverty. With him godliness with content was great riches; and it is more to the point to be sorry that he had not more books (he transcribed Leland’s new volumes because he could not buy them) than that he had few pence. Once, when Ben Jonson was walking with him, Stow jestingly asked two beggars “what they would have to take him to their order.” In short, the author of the *Survey of London* was one of those men to whom the past is the present, and books are food, and inscriptions are drink. One of his friends being asked, after his death, to carry on his *Summary of English Chronicles*, answered: “I thank God that I am not so mad to waste my Time, spend £200 a Year, trouble all my Friends, only to gain Assurance of Endless Reproach.”

Endless reproach! Rather three hundred years of fame and mastership. The *Survey of London* is belittled if we call it a book. It is a literary institution. Its picture of London under Elizabeth was so good that for nearly two hundred years the only way to write about London seemed to be to amplify Stow’s book. The *Survey* was originally a quarto, of 483 pages, printed in black letter. In 1603 it was extended to 579 pages by Stow. In 1618 it was enlarged by Anthony Munday. Fifteen years later Munday and

others enlarged it again. In 1657 Howel paid it the compliment of his *Perustration*. In 1720 Strype laid reverent hands upon it, and it emerged in two enormous folios, filled with maps and views of the growing city. In 1734 Seymour produced his variation on the theme. In 1756 Strype returned to his labour, and the final leviathan edition of Stow's *Survey of London* was produced with all that pomp and thoroughness of which the old county historians and their publishers held the secret. Thus Stow's clear stream of facts was brought by many conduits and much toil to a goodly reservoir (like that New River whose bringing to London the old man loved to watch and record), and therefrom countless writers—as great as Northouck and as small as Timbs—have drawn their supplies, paying fees in some sparse allusion to "Old Stow," "the learned Stow," and, when the loan was large, "Stow, the indefatigable chronicler."

The man himself, the "onlie begetter" of it all, can be pictured with some clearness. He was born in the parish of St. Michael, Cornhill, where his father and his grandfather were born before him. He gives this delightful vignette of his childhood in writing of the abbey of nuns in the Minorities:

Near adjoining to this abbey, on the south side thereof, was sometime a farm belonging to the said nunnery; at the which farm I myself, in my youth, have fetched many a halfpenny worth of milk, and never had less than three ale pints for a halfpenny in the summer, nor less than one ale quart for a halfpenny in the winter, always hot from the kine, as the same was milked and strained. One Trolop, and afterwards Goodman, were farmers there, and had thirty or forty kine to the pail. Goodman's son, being heir to his father's purchase, let out the ground first for grazing of horses, and then for garden plots, and lived like a gentleman thereby.

After the garden plots came merchants' houses; after these came clothworkers, and then came Leman-street Police Station and "Jack the Ripper"; but in Leman-street you are still in "Goodman's Fields." For some time Stow lived in Aldgate Ward, where he saw the Bailiff of Romford hanged on one of those false informations which were the curse of the day. He himself had to rebut several charges of papistical leanings.

Stow's more lasting home was in Lime-street. Here his City lore came to be admired, and to be utilised in disputes. He was called as an expert witness in a cause between the City and the Lieutenant of the Tower of London. The Tower folk called him "the City's fee'd chronicler"; but he deserved the title in none but an honourable sense. He declared in his old age that he had never written for fear or favour. He loved to prick a bubble, or demolish a foolish tradition. He confuted the popular idea that the dagger in the City arms was an addition made after Sir William Walworth had killed Wat Tyler with his dagger; he exposed various tales of giants, whose alleged shank-bones and teeth were preserved in various City churches. He disputed whether Richard III. was really a hump-back, for, he said, he had spoken with "some antient Men, who, from their own sight and Knowledge, affirmed that he was of bodily shape comeley enought, only low of stature."

Did John Stow ever meet Shakespeare? The old man and the young must often have passed each other

in the streets; that may be safely affirmed. But did they talk? Probably not. Stow never once gilds his pages with the name of Shakespeare. He does not mention the theatres on Bank Side. No pulsations of the Shakespearian drama, no mention even of the boats that took thousands of Londoners over the river to the plays, are to be collected in Stow's book. It is a great pity; but the explanation probably is, that Stow sided with the City authorities in their hostility to the players. Moreover Stow was a practical old fellow, who liked to crush what romance he needed out of hard facts and harder stories; he did not care a fig for the Shakespearian drama. In 1602-1603 the old man revised his *Survey*, and Shakespeare wrote *Hamlet*. Stow was then seventy-eight years of age, and his feet were painful. "He observed," says Strype, "how his Affliction lay in that Part that formerly he had made so much use of in walking many a Mile to search after Antiquities." Next year Stow's poverty was so great that he took out Letters Patent to become a mendicant. But death was hastening to his comfort. He sank quietly, and was buried in the church of St. Andrew, Undershaft, leaving to men a good memory and a great book. He is the father of all them that love London.

Things Seen.

The Difference

THE clanging factory bell had ceased a minute since, and the strings of disordered girls leaving behind the echo of their gaudy laughter straggled off.

Pausing in front of a common jeweller's window, I was not aware that one of them was standing by me till she spoke, without preface, pointing towards a cheap "dress" ring on which the letters "Love" were traced in coloured stones. "I shouldn't—should you? care to wear it," she said simply.

"Why not?" I asked, answering, simply too, as an unknown friend. "Some way or other we all do."

"Not on my finger," she amended softly.

I turned round upon the speaker, to discover in her a sweet alien of her race.

"What!" I cried, "and yet you are wearing it in your eyes quite openly."

At which she dropped them, smiled, and with an "Oh! that's different," drifted on.

Waits.

Two turns brought me from the crowded highway along which cab and omnibus were speeding towards London's centre of attraction—to the quiet street in which fire and food awaited me. As I made the second turn I saw, through the murk of a mid-December evening, three figures pressed close against the area-railings—surely my own area-railings. And through the murk came, in a treble treble bawl, the sound of "Peace on earth—good 'ill ter men."

The area door opened with a clatter.

"Now, then, be off with yer! I'd smack yer 'eds if I could get near yer. Makin' that noise. Now, then!"

"Garn! Want yer airy winder broke?" said the biggest of the trio, pulling himself up by the railings and resting his chin between the spikes.

As I entered at the gate they scurried away in fear and trembling, and cook, distracted, slammed the area door. A minute later a waft of discord came down the street:

"'Ark the 'erald angels sing."

Expectation.

THE pilot-boat *Alert* was off the Sutherland coast in the heartless grey before a springtime dawn. Ally Oge, at the tiller, and I, perched on the gunwale, watched the oncoming day.

The wind was a breath, but the sea was restless with a choppy swell; and as the smack lurched into the green hollows, the great boom swung out with a harsh clatter and the topping lift lashed the mainsail like a whip.

There was an uncertain groping of tender light in the unclouded east. The warm tints went shyly up the arches of the sky. Inland, cold mountain peaks lit like torches and, as the world grew more awake, the colours of the land—brown for the heather, yellow for the wild grass, and black for the poor patches of tilled land—became vivid, and here and there the dew-wet rocks glistened like jewels.

The sky was now bright for the day's work, and the quivering radiance in the east told of the sun on the water's brink; and slowly, majestically it slipped from the deep, and every wavelet of the spacious sea smiled a rosy welcome. The foolish guillemots even flapped their wings in odd glee.

The earth, the sky, and the sea were full of the glory.

Ally's grey eyes quickened as he turned to me and said in a solemn voice: "I was thinking it would be gran' to live always waiting for a morning, just always expecting it, an' at last, at one's dying, to waken wi' one's hopes coming true like this. Eh?"

Memoirs of the Moment.

THE opinions of leading Liberals about the leadership are hard to get. Delicate complications, springing from personal relationships, tie the tongue. All the more interesting, for that reason, may be the candid opinions of Sir Frank Lockwood, with whom, shortly before his death, the present writer happened to have a conversation on this very point. There was then no question about the retirement of Sir William Harcourt, whose unpopularity with the men of his own side in the House Sir Frank asserted, but said he could not explain. Sir Frank had warm words for Sir William; but he went on to speak, with an enthusiasm quite unusual to him, of Mr. Asquith as the Man of the Future. He called him the only possible leader, and he received any contrary suggestion with a nearer approach to impatience than was at all customary with him.

It is a patent of amiability to be almost universally spoken of by your Christian name. Such was the lot of

the late Christopher Sykes. Whether such good nature has in it a touch of weakness may be a question. Certain it is that "Christopher" at one time came within measurable distance of being the butt of his intimates. Only once did he need to assert himself. That was about thirty years ago in Yorkshire, where the Prince of Wales was one of the house-party. Christopher thought that familiarity with him was, perhaps, coming dangerously near to the point at which it breeds contempt. So he slipped quietly away. His absence was at once remarked, and half the pleasure of the party went with him. To the "Agony Column" of the *Times* was telegraphed an announcement: "If C. S. will return to his sorrowing friends all will be forgiven." The truant read the notice, smiled over it, and ignored it. Nor was it ever necessary for this most popular and really beloved of companions to give the hint again. He will always be remembered as the finest possible example of "the tame cat"; the friend of children; the sport, in a sense, of his contemporaries; the intimate of men half his own age; who was able to be all this and yet not forfeit his dignity. Nearly every household, happily, has "Christopher's" counterpart, and his memory is green for ever.

MONEY troubles were the real cause of the death of this particular friend of princes. Things were very flourishing with him once, for his father had fortune enough to make both his sons rich men. But times changed, and losses other than those lately incidental to all land-owning came to him. When a few months ago the paralytic stroke first came to him, he was the guest of one of the many royalties of whom he was the favourite, and who only doubled their devotions to him when he was down in his fortunes. During November he seemed to be recovering, and his tall figure was to be seen again at Church Parade. With the resumption of the public proceedings relative to claims and counterclaims in the case of Jennings v. Sykes he worried himself a good deal. Doctors' certificates kept him from court, where, otherwise, he would probably have had the further and fatal stroke, which, all the same, was delayed only a few days.

MR. JOHN MORLEY has two step-daughters, to whom he is deeply attached. One of these, who has hitherto been known among her friends chiefly by her very bright manners and her zeal as a cyclist, has now decided to be a nun, and last week she went to her noviciate.

THERE was a dinner-party at the Reform Club last Saturday on a scale that recalled the old days. The host was the Lord Chief Justice of England, and the forty guests included four of his sons, the Lord Chancellor (looking younger than ever), the Master of the Rolls, Lord Justices Davey and Lawrence, Mr. John Sargent, R.A. (who has had a sitting a week steadily from the Lord Chief Justice for the last couple of months), Sir Arthur Sullivan, Mr. Bourke Corkran (a considerable figure in New York politics), Mr. Joseph Walton, Q.C., Mr. Samuel Pope, Q.C., Sir George Lewis, and Mr. Arnold Morley, M.P. (who had a good deal *not* to say about the leadership).

A very distinguished judge, who is also an Irishman, and who happened to be there, expressed, for instance, his dissent at the name of Asquith. "Oh, I know all about the clang," retorted the ex-Solicitor-General. The allusion was to the refusal of Mr. Asquith, when at the Home Office, to release some of the dynamite prisoners, on whom he was accused by Mr. Justin McCarthy of shutting the cell doors with a clang. The episode was an interesting one; for it showed that, in a small company at dinner, between two prominent Liberals, and both of them Home Rulers, there was the same diversity as that which showed itself on a larger platform when Mr. Asquith rose to speak the other day at the Federation meeting in Birmingham.

MR. WILLIAM BLACK, if he had not many personal friends, had many admiring readers among the "younger men," and these had the best of all representatives at his funeral in Mr. Rudyard Kipling, who was accompanied by his wife. Mr. Kipling, as is well known, has lived a good deal at Rottingdean of late, having been drawn thither by his aunt, Lady Burne-Jones, who is now to reside there permanently, giving up, as many will grieve to learn, the old house in London, which is full of associations for her and, indeed, for all her friends. Mr. William Black, who, as we mentioned last week, was at one time an art student, and at another an art critic, most admired a school of painting far removed from the pre-Raphaelite or the mediæval. Mr. Colin Hunter, A.R.A., whose praise had often been on Mr. Black's pen and tongue, was among the mourners; but the novelist takes his long repose now, in the graveyard at Rottingdean, at the feet of Burne-Jones.

HE family of Ada Smith, the young poetess, of whom "J. L. G." (initials, by the way, which a reference to the contents of the current number of the *Fortnightly Review* will interpret) wrote last week, have sent out a little card in notification of her death. It bears no conventional black edge, nor is it sent out in a "mourning" envelope. The simple legend runs: "Ada Elizabeth Smith. Born 25th March, 1875; died 7th December, 1898." And opposite is a verse of her own composing:

Alone Thou knowest how the night,
Closing round day's endeavour, brings
To finite cares the Infinite,
With hush and healing on its wings,
The glory of Thy Face in sight.

UPWARDS of a quarter of a million of money has been received at the *Times* office on account of the re-issue (from old plates) of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. The amount is prodigious; and its lesson to booksellers, however depressed momentarily, ought to be one of encouragement. For it simply proves that there is no limit to what the public will spend on books, if only the public is approached in the proper way.

ENGLISH visitors to Rome—and the Duke of Connaught is now of the number—will hear with pleasure the rumour of an Englishman's appointment to be *major domo* at the

Vatican. If an Englishman cannot be Pope, his next best thing is to be ruler of the Pope's household; and Mgr. Stonor has many qualifications for the task. Many members of his family, including the present Lord Camoys and the Countess de Hautepool, have been in attendance at Windsor or at Marlborough House, to say nothing of the great Sir Robert Peel's daughter, who became by marriage the Hon. Mrs. Stonor, and who stands out among the Ladies-in-Waiting upon the Queen. There are a good many links between Leo XIII. and Queen Victoria, what with coinciding jubilees and so forth; and now another will be supplied by the service rendered to one and to the other by the same Stonor family.

THE Post Office is labouring under a sense of injury. A gentleman, whose name may easily be guessed, but shall not be divulged, is going to post to every member of every Legislature in Australasia—and there are seven such Legislatures—a letter upon Christmas Day with only a penny stamp. Each letter will entail at the other end a certain trouble in the collection of the double overcharge; nor is it unlikely that it will elicit a certain amount of language from wearied legislators roused early from bed to rifle their pockets for the demanded threepence. The envelope (when opened) will be found to contain this sum in postage-stamps, so that no serious loss will fall on the receiver. But he will get in addition a statement of the advantages of Ocean Penny Postage, especially as applied to Australia, and the fuss attending the receipt of the missive is supposed to ensure for it a certain and even a careful perusal.

THE account published in an evening paper of an accident to Mr. H. S. Tuke and to his next Academy picture has given needless alarm to his friends. Mr. Tuke did slip on the rocks near his Falmouth home, but not seriously; nor was he carrying his picture at the time. Mr. Tuke, who has commissions for one or two portraits, is now in town.

The Contributors' Playground.

Wanted—a Satirist.

Is there no wit extant in England, that the hard, bright breed of Satirists is no more? We have, it is true, lively triflers in that kind who shall indite you verse that tickles rather than stings, and who can handle their prose like a quick, pretty rapier—with a button at its point. But where are the root-and-branch men, who threw stones instead of *confetti*?

Yes, even London, the "Greatest Show on Earth," is duller wanting them; and I am sure that the advent of a censor of the old strain—a lusty fellow who should prod us up with a pole—would be hailed with delight by every one, until, indeed, he reached our own proper cage, when, no doubt, we should execrate vigorously both the intrusive pole and the truculent ruffian who wielded it.

But consider the sharp joy of associating a scorpion epigram with the name of a Prime Minister; or of enfilad-

ing the bench of Bishops with a candid volley of lampoons ; or of throwing handfuls of spitting, spiteful squibs among the ermined Peers or of riotously playing Aunt Sally with "damply-serious" Novelists, whose countenances, though reminiscent of former incarnations, are but obscure hints and scamped indices of the glorious souls within. I do not insist that we should be much the better for this, but that we should be emphatically none the worse, and I believe that we should put on a good deal of mental fibre in the course of our strenuous Pantomime Rally. And though all of us would be hot and dusty, and some of us might come out of it rubbing our shoulders, the honest sort would emerge radiant with laughter.

But where is the destined Lord of Misrule? Alas, our jesters crack their jokes upon external things and little things, and laugh from the teeth outwards! I have my eye upon a Perfect Wag, a "Russet Wit" (I suppress even his gibbous initials), who is capable of deeper incision. But until he girds up his loins to battle, the P—t L—e might revert to an earlier vein, and lash out in decasyllabics that would enliven us even more than his rhymed patriotism.

N.

A Dream of Yule.

In the midmost night,
When the hurtling hours had died
And the stars lived,
And little winds by lonely forests woke,
And streams were rapt,
And far seas filled with deep-charged messages,
An untranslated murmur, yet a Soul,
E'en as the sound of some sweet, foreign speech
Upon a poet's lips—
In that high hour time's ill
Seemed to have slipped like garments old and worn
From off the reverent and the natural earth ;
And with awakened visionary eyes
I saw in city, inland, by lone shores,
And in the northern homes 'neath moaning pines
The million, million Yule-logs of the night.
And famished people came and dipped their hands
Into the generous light in every nook ;
Their wan eyes, cold at first, and half afraid,
Lit kindly ; and, made warm, they seem'd to say :
" These fires are our dead souls
That rise and glow, and luminous being give
Once in the desolate, half-living year.
Lo, we and the flames grow one, and all is soul ;
And all the master-spirits of the Past,
Our Dead whose going dulled the desert years,
Leading their spirit-lives in distant stars,
And glowing in the flames of other suns,
Behold the light and know that we have risen ;
And, swifter than our thought, from star and star
Are with us ; and awhile unbonded man
Is warmer with the universal soul.
Fate sleeps upon the breast of night divine,
And all the trodden roses of the world
Expand in shining stars of bloom till morn."

W. P. RYAN.

Readers' Nerves.

A LADY was invariably afflicted on Sunday afternoons with a peculiar sort of asthma. A shrewd friend discovered the cause. On Sunday mornings she was accustomed to hear a preacher who, strange to say, was the root of the mischief. The subject-matter of his sermon was interesting, but his utterance was so hurried, and his thought so rapid, that his words seemed to fall one over the other. With such sympathy did the lady listen, that every nerve she possessed seemed fully exercised. When the preacher stumbled—as he frequently did—she held her breath, as though to assist him to regain his verbal uprightness ; and every action was nervously reproduced, with more than the preacher's expenditure of force. Hence the nervous catching of the breath on Sunday afternoon.

Are there not readers whose nerves thus trouble them—readers who go far beyond those women of whom, in *Two Years Ago*, Tom Thurnall speaks as resembling the thistle-eating donkey, "because they find a little pain pleasant"? Even books of interest, but especially those sickly studies in moral pathology and those extravagances in sentiment with which the literary market abounds, produce harmful nervous effects, which, probably, have never been diagnosed. The works of the neurotic school of fiction are a source of unreal feelings—assiduous imps of evil that play havoc with the nerves. A fondness for morbid moods of mind, a love for emotional analysis, which "studies in the luxury of woe" engender, may result in the decadence of the entire nervous system. A German physician, going to the States to practise, became bewildered by the variety of nervous complaints he was called upon to cure, and at last declared he had discovered a new disease, "Americanitis." Some ingenious medico may possibly find an appropriate name for what I would now call "Readers' Nerves," and may also indicate how the varieties of the disease—as induced, for instance, by theology on the one hand and fiction on the other—may be readily distinguished.

The college slang of New England has an unpolished but expressive term, "dry-drunk," by which it denotes nervous excitement and consequent lack of control. If such phraseology is adopted, we may admit that resultant nervous prostration is none other than a species of *delirium tremens*. From nervous prostration to melancholia, with its attendant evils, is but a short step. How many a reader suffers through jaded nerves, well-nigh worn out, indeed, as the result of sham emotions produced by pessimistic fiction. If life is as many writers have depicted it, our only remedy would be Carlyle's old cure of universal suicide, or the kindly tail of Huxley's comet.

Let us have more healthy, hopeful books—books that pleasantly stimulate the reader's imagination rather than harrow his nerves ; books that brace his mind rather than soak it in morbid sentiment ; books that stimulate action rather than lead to introspection ; and if at times the skies cannot be made otherwise than dark, shall it not be shown that behind the clouds are unsullied depths of blue ?

R. W. R.

The Book Market.

In the States and Canada.

THE American *Bookman's* latest list of the most popular books in the States and Canada is as interesting as usual. Twenty-eight reports are given, covering the whole of literary North America, if we may use a term so little known to cartographers. The first thing one notices is the popularity of Mr. Kipling's *The Day's Work*. It heads no fewer than thirteen lists, and is mentioned in seventeen.

The next most popular book is by an American writer—Dr. Weir Mitchell. His *Adventures of François* is first favourite in Cincinnati, Montreal, New Orleans, Salt Lake City, and Toledo, O., and it is mentioned seventeen times—the same number as *The Day's Work*.

The third most popular book is Mr. Merriman's *Roden's Corner*. It is the most sought-after book in New York (Uptown), and is nine times mentioned.

The three next favourites are Mrs. Voynich's *The Gadfly*, Mr. Parker's *The Battle of the Strong*, and Mr. Jerome's *Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow*.

Below we quote the reports of best selling books for five great cities of the New World.

NEW YORK.

Roden's Corner. Merriman.
Adventures of François. Mitchell.
The Day's Work. Kipling.
Red and Black. Stendhal.
Romance of a Midshipman. Clark Russell.
Tekla. Barr.

BOSTON.

The Day's Work. Kipling.
Roden's Corner. Merriman.
Prisoners of Hope. Mary Johnston.
Adventures of François. Mitchell.
Battle of the Strong. Parker.
Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow. Jerome.

PHILADELPHIA.

The House of Hidden Treasure. Gray.
Her Ladyship's Elephant. Wells.
Hope the Hermit. Lyall.
The Loves of the Lady Arabella. Seawell.
Bismarck. Busch.
The Terror. Gräs.

CHICAGO.

The Day's Work. Kipling.
My Scrap-Book of the French Revolution. Latimer.
Rupert of Hentzau. Hope.
Adventures of François. Mitchell.
Battle of the Strong. Parker.
A Yankee Volunteer. Taylor.

MONTREAL.

Adventures of François. Mitchell.
Castle Inn. Weyman.
The Day's Work. Kipling.
The Red Axe. Crockett.
Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow. Jerome.
Battle of the Strong. Crockett.

Book Reviews Reviewed.

Mr. Black
and
His Novels

SIR WEMYSS REID, one of Mr. Black's oldest and closest friends, contributes to the *Speaker* a most interesting personal sketch, from which we take the following sentences:

His dearest friend could not say that he shone in mixed society, and as a consequence he often made a false impression upon the casual acquaintances who encountered him in the great world. That was simply because he kept his real soul, his true nature, hidden jealously from all vulgar eyes. Now and then to some favoured friend he opened his mind freely, and . . . one saw . . . the purest, manliest, most chivalrous and tender nature that the world has seen in recent days.

I am sure that the characters of his stories were more real to him than most of the men and women whom he encountered in everyday life. They were so real that their fate affected him as if it had been the fate of his dearest friends. For months after he finished *McLeod of Dare*, with its great tragedy of baffled love, he was so shaken in nerve that he did not dare to ride in a hansom cab.

One day, in the far-off past, I was walking along the sea-front with Black, at Brighton, when he said abruptly, and with reference to nothing that had been passing between us: "We are not all engaged in running away with other men's wives. There are some of us who are not the victims of mental disease or moral deformity. I do not even know that anybody of my acquaintance has committed a murder or a forgery. Yet people are angry with me because I do not make my characters in my books odious in this fashion. I prefer to write about sane people and honest people; and I imagine that they are, after all, in a majority in the world." Bald as this statement was of the limitations he set upon his art, it was absolutely true. He delighted to tell pure stories, dealing with wholesome manly men and tender womanly women.

The *Standard* says:

It was . . . by his fifth story, *A Daughter of Heth*, that William Black may be almost said to have leaped into popularity. That novel exhibited in a high degree the possession by the author of one of his most striking gifts. We refer to his talent for the development of incongruities, full, on the one hand, of possibilities of humour and of entertainment to the observer; but charged, also, with potentialities of distress and even tragedy to those immediately concerned.

This writer says that Mr. Black's literary level has of necessity varied:

It would, perhaps, have been better for his lasting reputation if he had been able to concentrate his efforts on the production of a smaller number of stories. But his best work is delightful, because it is that of a real artist and of a man of essentially wholesome mind.

The *Athenaeum* insists on the excellence of Mr. Black's female characters:

His chief success and his most praiseworthy characteristic consisted in the skill with which he drew women who were at once natural and lovable. Indeed, his men are far inferior, as human beings, to his girls and women. Many contemporary novelists may be greater philosophers, but

none has quite equalled him in giving fair play to woman's nature at its best, and painting a gallery of portraits which contains so many personages who can be comprehended by the average reader.

Literature says that Mr. Black's popularity was earned by good, honest work, by close observation of certain types of character and manner, and by a constant study of scenery and atmosphere in which he was helped by his early artistic training. The truth of his eye for colour and effect was so recognised by landscape artists that many of them almost recognised him as one of themselves.

The *Times* points out that Mr. Black found his *métier* in fiction and adhered to it:

New movements in fiction came and went, leaving upon his novels as little trace as the storms and rains of centuries have left upon the wild beauty of the Highlands he loved so well. In this devotion lay for many people the great charm of his stories. His characters, too, seemed more natural, more sympathetically drawn, when they trod the heather. In fact, the novelist was never happier than when the time came for his yearly northward journey, when the pen was laid aside for the fishing-rod; and he never wrote better than when he laid his scene amid the spots he never tired of revisiting.

The *Daily News* had a specially mournful interest in the death of Mr. Black, who was for years the assistant editor of that paper. The *Daily News* obituary notice dwelt much on Mr. Black's journalistic work and the aptitudes it created in him for fiction. The following note of Mr. Ruskin's opinion on one of Mr. Black's novels is interesting:

Black's first step on the ladder of ambition was taken in the drawing schools. As a youth, he thought that his vocation was art. Much reading of Ruskin was in part responsible for it. Mr. Ruskin, we may add, was in after years a great admirer of Black's stories. "I have had it long on my mind," he wrote in 1878, "to name the *Adventures of a Phaeton* as a very delightful and wise book of its kind; very full of pleasant play, and deep and pure feeling; much interpretation of some of the best points of German character; and, last and not least, with pieces of description in it which I should be glad, selfishly, to think inferior to what the public praise in *Modern Painters*—I can only say they seem to me quite as good."

Correspondence.

Mr. Capes on His Style.

SIR,—I am grateful to you for your kindly review—in your issue of December 17—of my particular insignificance. I am grateful, indeed, with plenty of reason, to most of my critics; wherefore, I have not thought hitherto of protesting against one form of correction to which these excellent provost-marshals of literature have persistently subjected me. You at last goad me to the personal wail. Let me utter it and be done. You goad me through the very compliment implied in a special notice of my work, because the notice is special and authoritative, and, presumably, deliberate. Sir, I will grant my style is sinful. Its excuse is (dare I insist upon it!) it was

natural-born—of an author (not Mr. Meredith or another) and his Muse. Sir, I never sat at the feet of Mr. H. B. Marriott Watson, nor do I know the gentleman's name or his works but by the vaguest report. You say my style is tortured. No wonder, when it suffers under such imputations. Let me, while on the subject, go yet a further step. I have read one book, and only one, by Mr. Meredith—*The Shaving of Shagpat*. That was years ago. Is it not hard, therefore, that that great writer (whom I honour because he is honoured of better men than me) should be held responsible for this bastard that cannot, in the nature of things, inherit the least of his features. I beg you to allow me this little solitary appeal. "The rest is silence."—Your (save in this one respect) obliged servant,

BERNARD CAPES.

Winchester: December 19, 1898.

The Wages of Research.

SIR,—In your last issue you state the price of Miss Hull's *Cuchullin Saga* at 5s. net. May I ask you to correct this? The price is 7s. 6d. net. I am not foolish enough to expect to make any money by a book which is, as you kindly say, "the best introduction to the wildest and most fascinating division of Irish myth," for how many are they who really care for such matters? But I should not care to lose 1s. 6d. on every copy printed, which I should have to do if I sold it at five shillings.

May I further comment upon your expression of the "trust that Mr. Nutt will see his way to continuing the proposed Dictionary of British Folklore, of which Mrs. Gomme's *Traditional Games* are a first instalment"? The decision does not rest either with author or with publisher, it rests with the book-buying public, and especially with the public libraries of all kinds, which ought to buy works of a scholarly character, but which, for the most part, neglect their duty.

In the prospectus of Mrs. Gomme's *Traditional Games* I state that "the continuation of the Dictionary of British Folklore can only be assured if at least 500 subscribers come forward at a subscription rate of 10s. 6d. net for demy octavo volumes of 400 pages." When it is considered that there are in the English-speaking world at least 350 important libraries of a public or semi-public character, it might be thought that there would be no difficulty in compliance with such a modest requirement as that above stated. How often have I not been told: "Oh, the libraries will take at least 300." As a matter of fact, only some fifty out of the 350 existing institutions can be counted upon to buy works of a scholarly character, and of these the majority are in the United States. The utterly inadequate machinery for the material encouragement of scholarly research in the English-speaking world is a crying scandal, and is a matter, I venture to think, of considerably more importance to the literary world than others about which it is accustomed to excite itself.—I am, &c.,

ALFRED NUTT.

270, Strand.

A Matter of Spelling.

SIR,—“J. M.” is evidently not fully acquainted with the rules which govern the use of the indefinite article in English; they are to be found in most grammars, but I venture to recapitulate them. As a matter of fact, all your correspondent's examples will be found to be correct, except one. The exception is “an household word,” which is unjustifiable from any point of view, since the initial aspirate is always sounded and occurs in an accented syllable. On the other hand, “an historical fact,” “an hotel” are correct. The reason is, that the first syllables of these two words are not accented. Thirdly, and lastly, there is a class of words, once large but now rapidly dwindling away, in which the initial aspirate is not pronounced at all. To this class the adjective *humble* once belonged; at present the fashion is to restore its aspirate, but the fact that at one time everybody omitted it is sufficient excuse for the collocation “an humble person” —I am, &c.,

JAMES PLATT JUNIOR.

St. Martin's-lane, W.C.

SIR,—“J. M.” appears to be concerned about a very small matter. If one thinks fit to write “an historical” he certainly has usage and the majority of authors on his side, despite Dr. Murray's note in the little handbook in service at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, to the effect that “nobody says so now, except old men—pedants chiefly.” This booklet, moreover, favours the article *an* before both “historical” and “hotel.” In respect to “a union” and “a humble” it is in agreement with “J. M.” The determination of the article is, after all, more a question of euphony than either that of strict adherence to a grammatical rule or “a matter of spelling.”—I am, &c.,

J. G.

“You two shall now be made wan beef.”

SIR,—In your “Notes on Novels” (p. 480) on *The Gortchen* you quote an anecdote about a marriage by a Highland minister who made the mistake of saying “You two shall be made wan beef” instead of “flesh.” The author goes on to say that “beef” and “flesh” are the same in Gaelic. This is not quite accurate. The Gaelic for “flesh” is *fèoil*, to which is prefixed the word signifying *what kind of flesh*. Thus “beef” is *mairt-fhèoil* (from *mairt* “a cow”), “mutton” is *muil-fhèoil* (from *muil* “wether,” and so on. The minister in question may likely have made the mistake of substituting “beef” for “flesh” in *English*, but his native language would hardly have been responsible for the error.—I am, &c.,

Oxford: Dec. 18, 1898.

C. S. JERRAM.

Our Literary Competitions.

Result of No. 11.

LAST week we asked each competitor to name the book which, in his or her opinion, is the best that 1898 has yet produced, and to accompany the choice with a concise criticism of not more than eighty words in which its merits are set forth. The best commentary—that is to say, the most literary and capable—has been sent by Mr. W. W. Gibson, Battle Hill, Hexham, the subject

being Mr. Hewlett's *Forest Lovers*. Mr. Gibson's criticism runs thus:

“This book is packed full of victorious youth, the breath of the morning wind, the mystery of the forest, and the glory and wonder of the broad world. It is living flesh and blood romance, sprung direct from the true stock of Malory. It has the glamour of the old and the force and vigour of the new. Its men and women are the men and women of all time; and LOVE is the beginning and the end.”

To Mr. Gibson a cheque for a guinea has been posted.

A selection of other criticisms follows:—

JOHN SPLENDID.

BY NEIL MUNRO.

This book is in many ways the best romance published since *Lorna Doone*. Like Blackmore's famous story, *John Splendid* is alive in every sense of real literature. Vigour and health go to the making of it, and a keenness of sentiment and a deep knowledge of history, with all the little things that make it, result in a book which displays “real romance” in a most excellent fashion.

The Kailyard is deserted quite

Drumtochty's Ian's reign is ended,

Romance again asserts her right

An' glows with splendour in *John Splendid*.

[H. P. B., Glasgow.]

AYLWIN.

BY THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON

Aylwin comes like a breath of mountain air to a toiling, harassed city. It is not a sex-problem, it is not second-rate history, it is not of the kailyard. Its characterisation is not obtrusive, its theme is pure romance, its problem is spiritual rather than material, and it is written in exquisite English. It wins, but does not force either sympathy or emotion. The outlook is hopeful. As we close the book Sinfì lives in our memories hand-in-hand with Rebecca in *Ivanhoe*.

[H. S. R., Cardiff.]

CONCERNING ISABEL CARNABY.

BY E. T. FOWLER.

As a book to be read for recreation, I consider *Isabel Carnaby* the best of the year. It is bright, brilliant, and pretty, free from the nasty scenes and language of many so-called smart books. The author shows a keen appreciation of character, and a great insight into the small matters of daily life. Whether we like the people or not, they are human, and not impossibilities.

[M. A., Manchester.]

HELBECK OF BANNISDALE.

BY MRS. HUMPHRY WARD.

This novel has all Mrs. Ward's merits of purity and sincerity. Equally earnest as *Robert Elsmere*, yet sadder than *Sir George Trevelyan*, for his life was sacrificed in a noble effort to save those of his fellow-creatures. True sympathy with Helbeck's embarrassments would have strengthened this invertebrate heroine to live for the sake of her beloved. The spiritual and sordid side of religion, as apprehended by a covetous Church and a saintly layman, is emphasised by the contrast between the priests and their prey.

[Mrs. W., Chichester.]

THE DAY'S WORK.

BY RUDYARD KIPLING.

The book I should choose is *The Day's Work*, since all the world—book-lovers and book-scorers, men and boys, women and children—enjoy something, and something different, in Kipling's writing; but the something is always good. He can tell a story like “The Tomb of His Ancestors.” He can bring us into the vividly vague dream-world of the opium-eater. And he can even almost make our hearts throb in unison with a steamship propeller. Surely this is true genius.

[H. M., London.]

THE CALIFORNIANS.

BY MRS. ATHERTON.

The *Californians*, with reservations (unsustained interest and needless digressions). The Californian atmosphere is vividly reproduced, and Magdalena Yorba a creation of an uncommon type, betraying a

violent, almost cruel, insight into mind, heart, and character. Comparisons are absurd, but if Mrs. Ward could transfer [to Mrs. Atherton] her high seriousness, her feeling for the intense meaning in all life, or the author her feminine vivaciousness, her practical grasp of character [to Mrs. Ward] (Mrs. Ward builds up too much), we should have a great woman writer.

[P. S., Belfast.]

Answers received also from: J. F., Brondesbury; T. E. O., Brighton; H. J., Crouch End; W. S., Wandsworth; E. T. S., Wandsworth; J. A. S., Edinburgh; C. R. B., Beddgelert; W. H. H., Killiney; C. E., Worthing; and A. G., Cheltenham.

Competition No. 12.

This week we ask for "Things Seen." A cheque for one guinea will be sent to the competitor whose competition is judged the best; while for all contributions which we decide to print we propose to pay at our usual rate. The "Things Seen" on pages 522-523, although they give an idea of what is meant, must not be considered as perfect models. What we require is a record of first-hand observation, concisely and directly written. But so many of our contributors have described only sad spectacles, that in this competition we make a condition that the "Thing Seen" must be gay, or at any rate not melancholy; and we limit the chronicler to 200 words.

Answers, addressed "Literary Competition, The ACADEMY, 43, Chancery-lane, W.C.," must reach us not later than the first post of Tuesday, December 27. Each answer must be accompanied by the coupon to be found at the foot of the first column of p. 498.

The "Academy" Bureau.

THE INFATUATION OF NIEL MURRAY.

BY MOZA.

"A figure above the average height, perfectly moulded; a face of Madonna-like serenity, glorious eyes of lustrous gray, a straight nose with delicately chiselled nostrils, left nothing to be desired in the matter of loveliness." All this is not bad for a cook; and Niel Murray's infatuation was for the cook, and no wonder he wished to run away with her. But why did he shout the proposal to do so so loud in the garden that an invalid could hear it in the room overhead? Of course his plan was frustrated; but, anyhow, the damsel preferred a lowlier suitor. Nothing here conduces to presentable fiction.

THE WINE OF LIFE AND THE SPIRIT OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

BY A. M. S.

These stories are too short for separate publication, and not quite up to the magazine standard. In the *Wine of Life* the shipwreck is a stirring incident, but there is no other item of remarkable interest, and the instantaneous love of Roland for Dora is unreal. *The Spirit of the Southern Cross* is a capital story up to the time when the hero becomes engaged to Marion, after which it tails off, and the end is anti-climax. At the point referred to in the narrative there are materials for a very pretty drama.

JONAS FISHER, STUDENT OF DIVINITY. BY "FINLAY CRAIG."

Jonas Fisher studied his divinity in the slums of the East End, and though he tasted the cup of Socialism, did not renounce the chalice of dogma. Here he met Mary Willing, who had been governess to the drunken daughter of a rich brewer, and married her. There is a fundamental error underlying the controversial side of this book, and that is, that faith in some great human cause is identical with faith in the Christian tradition. This is a fallacy, as is also the hypothesis that reason is opposed to faith, and not its groundwork. There are

some good descriptions in places, but there is a decided want of "go," somehow, in "Finlay Craig's" pages. By the by, are there such words as "obligement" and "upkeep"? And surely "on the street" is an intolerable Americanism!

ON A BROKEN WING.

BY E. B. B.

The hero's wing was broken by "a blurred, heart-broken, strongly-scented little letter" from his lady love, to say she was marrying someone else she liked better. The adjective "heart-broken" here seems a little misplaced. Subsequently he was further shattered by the receipt of a document written by his deceased father, declaring himself "a dangerous lunatic," and exhorting the recipient to "fly to the uttermost corner of creation." The recipient did his best, sought a remote island, loved a savage maiden, and got engulfed with the island and the maiden in a volcanic cataclysm—details a little dubious. "On a Broken Wing" belongs to the infant stage of literary effort.

THE FOURTH GENERATION.

BY C. D. L.

This is a story of an English vendetta; of a bloodthirsty family feud handed on through four generations, beginning from the battle of Waterloo. There is surely no such inherited vindictiveness outside Corsica. Hence a basis of improbability. Still, the book is well written, and is full of incident, ranging from Devonshire to South Africa. But the episodes of love and revenge are too much in the time-honoured groove to warrant publication.

Books Received.

Week ending Thursday, December 22.

THEOLOGICAL AND BIBLICAL.

- Davies (Rev. Edwin), *Gems from the Fathers* (Bagster) 5/0
Kautzsch (E.), *Outline of the History of the Literature of the Old Testament* (Williams & Norgate) 6/0

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

- De Burgh (A.), *Elizabeth, Empress of Austria* (Hutchinson) 6/0
Constable (H. S.), *Ireland* ("Liberty Review") 1/0
Hamilton (Sir R. V.), *Letters and Papers of Admiral Sir Thomas Byam Martin, G.C.B. Vol. II.* (Navy Records Society)
Trumbull (H. C.), *War Memories of an Army Chaplain* (Scribner's Sons)
Norie (W. D.), *Loyal Lochaber* (Morrison Bros.) net 10/6
Lane-Poole (S.), *Saladin* (Putnam's Sons) 5/0
Le Dix-Huitième Siècle (Hachette)

POETRY, CRITICISM, BELLES-LETTRES.

- Hardy (T.), *Wessex Poems, and Other Verses* (Harpers) 6/0
Maynell (Mrs.), *The Spirit of Place* (Lane) 3/6
Browning (R.), *The Ring and the Book* (Smith, Elder)
Rossetti (W. M.), *Ruskin: Rossetti: Pre-Raphaelitism* (Allen) 10/6
Garrison (W. P.), *The New Gulliver* (Maison Press)
Catalogue of Pictures in the National Gallery and National Portrait Gallery, Ireland (Thom) 6d.

SCIENCE, NATURAL HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, ETC.

- Fison (A. H.), *Recent Advances in Astronomy* (Blackie) 2/6
McCarthy (Justin), *Modern England Before the Reform Bill* (Unwin) 5/0

NEW EDITIONS.

- Goldsmith (O.), *The Deserted Village* (Dent)
Shelley (P. B.), *The Sensitive Plant. Illustrated, L. Housman* (Dent)
Carey (R. N.), *Only the Governess* (Macmillan) 3/6

MISCELLANEOUS.

- University College, London: *Calendar, 1898-9* (Taylor & Francis)
The Publications of the Selden Society. Vol. XII.: 1898
Cellini (B.), *Treatises on Goldsmithing and Sculpture* (Arnold) 35/0
Calman (C. S.), *The Sportsman's Year-Book* (Lawrence & Bullen) 2/6

** *The new novels of the week, numbering five, are catalogued elsewhere.*

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